BAPTISM

ITS MODE AND SUBJECTS

Rev. W. J. LOWE, M.A.

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BY THE

REV. W. J. LOWE, M.A.

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PREFACE.

THE lectures given to the public in this volume were delivered, for the most part, on successive Sabbath evenings, in the Church of which I am minister. They were listened to by large congregations, and reports of them that appeared in the local Press excited a good deal of interest. Many requests came to me from my brethren in the ministry and others, asking me to put the lectures in a more permanent form. These requests were not merely numerous but so representative that I thought it my duty to comply with them.

The lectures have been published practically as they were delivered. A few local allusions that were not of general interest have been omitted. The lecture form has been retained. The lectures are now sent forth in the hope that they may be of some service to the cause of truth.

W. J. LOWE.

LONDONDERRY, *April*, 1899.

27397

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—INTRODUCTORY.

PAGE

Division of the Subject—Position defined—*Baptizo*—Classical Usage—New Testament Usage—Jewish Baptisms . 1

LECTURE II.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

John's Baptism—Baptism with Water and Baptism with the Holy Spirit—Baptism in the Jordan—Circumstances of John's Baptism 11

LECTURE III.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

Baptism of the Three Thousand—Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch—Baptism of Paul—Baptism of Cornelius and others—Baptism of Lydia and her Household—Baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his Household . . . 27

LECTURE IV.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

Baptism into Christ—Baptism unto Moses—Antitype Baptism—Immersionism inconsistent with the Spirit of the Gospel Dispensation—Immersionism often Impracticable—The Testimony of Antiquity—The Westminster Assembly 43

LECTURE V.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*concluded.*

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—INTRODUCTORY.

PAGE

Baptist Quotation—Anabaptists and Immersion—Subjects of Baptism—The Position defined—Baptist Individualism—Mode of Determining the Question—The Principle of Representation 61

LECTURE VI.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

The Abrahamic Covenant—The Administration of the Covenant—Children in the Covenant and in the Church—The Apostolic Commission—Children may be Disciples 78

LECTURE VII.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

The Preaching Commission—Christ and the Children—The Continuity of the Church 97

LECTURE VIII.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

Baptism and Circumcision—A False Analogy—Children continue in the Church—Baptism and a Profession of Faith—Household Baptisms—No distinctively Baptist Baptism in the New Testament 113

LECTURE IX.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

Holy Children—Apostolic recognition of the Church standing of Children—Infant Dedication—The Testimony of the Early Fathers 131

LECTURE X.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*concluded.*

PAGE

Advantages of Infant Baptism — Infant Communion — Baptism a Public Ordinance 150

LECTURE XI.

REVIEW.

The Mode of Baptism—"Follow the Lord into the River" —The Westminster Assembly—Baptists and Immersion—Infant Baptism—Baptist Methods—The term "Baptist"—Conclusion 168

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.—BAPTIZO IN THE CLASSICS 187
NOTE B.—BAPTIZO IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND APOCRYPHA . 188

BAPTISM,

ITS MODE AND SUBJECTS.

LECTURE I.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—INTRODUCTORY.

THE subject of Baptism is one in regard to which there is some difference of opinion, and therefore it is a subject in regard to which we should have all the information that can be gathered from a careful study of the Word of God, so that our opinion may be not simply a matter of tradition but a matter of conviction. It is usual and convenient to divide the subject into two different compartments and to consider each separately. This course will save us from confusion and help us to find our way, by the unerring light of Scripture truth, to a right issue in each case. The two outstanding points in regard to which different opinions are entertained are (1) the Mode of Baptism, and (2) the Subjects of Baptism. We shall consider them in the order indicated.

POSITION DEFINED.

Before entering upon a detailed consideration of the question of Mode, it will be well to define the

respective positions of the Baptists and ourselves in relation to this point. The Baptists hold that immersion, and nothing but immersion, is Baptism, and that immersion is so essential to the due administration of the ordinance that one who has not been immersed has not been baptized. On the other hand, we hold that the ordinance is rightly administered, so far as mode is concerned, by pouring or sprinkling or immersion. We do not say that immersion is not Baptism. All we say is that it is not necessary to Baptism. We say that pouring or sprinkling is sufficient. It will thus be seen that with our Baptist friends mode is a matter of supreme importance, and that with us it is a very subordinate consideration. According to the Baptist contention, it would seem that mode is of far more importance than significance, and that the dipping which is actualized is of far more importance than the cleansing that is symbolized. Our contention is that the significance of the ordinance is the supreme consideration, and that mode is a matter of minor importance. We hold that the water is symbolical, and that for the purpose of symbol a cupful is as good as a tankful, just as, in the case of the Lord's Supper, a sip of wine and a bite of bread are as good for the purpose of symbol as if sufficient quantities of these elements were taken to constitute a full meal. We shall proceed to consider which of these positions is in harmony with the teaching of God's Word.

BAPTIZO—CLASSICAL USAGE.

Dr. Carson has an easy way of settling this controversy. He tells us that the Greek verb *baptizo* always means "to dip, and nothing but dip." He admits that all the lexicographers and all the commentators are against him, but that does not seem to cause him any concern. He is so self-confident that he goes on his way with apparently as much assurance as if they were all with him. His great failing is infallibility, but, in this matter at least, that is characteristic of the denomination of which he is admittedly the champion controversialist. He gives a number of quotations from Greek authors in which the word occurs, and tries to translate them all in accordance with his own view, for I may observe that he was a scholar, having been educated for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, and having been ordained to the pastorate of a Presbyterian congregation.[1] Dr. Carson contends for the unchangeableness of *baptizo*, which, according to him, continued for hundreds of years to have one meaning, and only one, which it retained all through without the slightest shade of variation, and which can be exactly expressed by an English verb. If that were so it would, I venture to submit, be a

[1] Dr. Alexander Carson was ordained to the ministry in the Congregation of Tobermore, by the Presbytery of Tyrone, in connection with the Synod of Ulster, on 11th December 1798. He severed his connection with the Synod in 1805 (*Records of the General Synod of Ulster*, Vol. III., pp. 217, 296, 298).

phenomenon perfectly unique in the history of language. Why, it is one of the great laws of language that the significance of words is subject to constant modification in response to the movements and achievements of human investigation and human thought. There is and must be some variation in the sense in which words are used as time goes on. That law of change is inevitable and irresistible, and *baptizo* did not lie outside the scope of its operation, as can be abundantly proved.

It may be observed that an extreme position like that of Dr. Carson is one that is very difficult to maintain and very easy to overthrow—that is, if it can be overthrown. When a man says that a word has always one meaning, and only one, he must bring forward every instance in which it is used in the literature to which it belongs in order to prove his statement, but an opponent has only to bring forward one instance in which it is used in a different sense in order to disprove the statement. So that Dr. Carson's whole theory is at the mercy of a solitary hostile example. If there is one instance in Greek literature in which *baptizo* means something else than to dip, then his case falls to the ground. And not one instance only, but several instances have been cited from Greek authors in which the verb not only does not mean to dip, but from which the notion of dipping is essentially excluded. Many such instances are given by Dr.

Wilson and Dr. Halley in their valuable works on Baptism, by Professor Stuart in an article in the *Biblical Repository* for April 1833, and by Dr. J. W. Dale in his exhaustive volume on *Classic Baptism*. Ast, a famous German scholar, who expended the labour of a lifetime on his *Lexicon Platonicum*, and who was not in any way interested in the controversy regarding Baptism, renders the verb *baptizo* to *overwhelm*, to *oppress* (*obruo*, *opprimo*), and nothing else. So that, according to this distinguished lexicographer, Plato knew nothing whatever of Baptism by immersion. And if you take any standard Greek lexicon you will find that the verb *baptizo* has several meanings. It means not only to *immerse*, but also to *overflow*, to *wet*, to *drench*, to *pour upon*, to *wash*, to *cleanse*, and to *overwhelm*.[1] So that if our Baptist friends wish to have a lexicon to their liking they must have it made to order, and when it has been manufactured they will not get any scholar to stand sponsor for it. According to Dr. Dale, and his view has generally commended itself to scholars, *baptizo* expresses a change of state or condition without defining the kind of action by which that change of state or condition has been effected.[2]

[1] See Note A at the end of the volume.

[2] Any student who wishes to make himself acquainted with the full significance of *baptizo* must study carefully Dr. Dale's four volumes — *Classic Baptism*, *Judaic Baptism*, *Johannic Baptism*, and *Christic and Patristic Baptism* (Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia).

NEW TESTAMENT USAGE.

Now, if Baptists could show that *baptizo* in the Classics always means to dip, they might come to the New Testament with that fact to their credit—whatever it might be worth. As we have seen, it is not a fact, but even if it were a fact, we cannot allow that the usage of the Classics determines the usage of the New Testament. The New Testament writers had, for the most part, to use the words they found to their hand, and by means of these words already in use, they had to express the new ideas which Christianity introduced. It was, therefore, in many cases necessary that the sense of an old word should be somewhat altered or modified that it might be suitable for its new use. The acceptance of new ideas always modifies to some extent the use of language. So that the meaning of *baptizo* in the New Testament cannot be determined from the usage of the Classics even if that usage were invariable. The New Testament usage must be determined from the New Testament itself, and to the New Testament we accordingly repair, bearing in mind that we have only to bring forward one instance in which *baptizo* does not signify to dip in order to overthrow the Baptist position.

JEWISH BAPTISMS.

Turn to Hebrews ix. 9, 10 : " According to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices that cannot, as

touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect, being only, with meats and drinks and divers washings (literally, baptisms), carnal ordinances imposed until a time of reformation" (R.V.). There is some difference of opinion as to the precise reference in the expression "divers washings" or "divers baptisms." Does it refer to the Jewish ceremonial at large, or does it refer to the service connected with the Tabernacle or Temple? Taking the whole context into consideration, I believe the expression is to be understood in the restricted sense, and refers to the "washings" that took place in connection with the tabernacle or temple service. The chief object of the writer in this chapter is to contrast "the first tabernacle" and its services with the "greater and more perfect tabernacle." Thus he naturally refers to the tabernacle "washings." However, if the more general reference be insisted on, and if the "different baptisms" or "washings" be made to include the washings that took place in private houses, we will not contest the point. All we contend for is that the tabernacle or temple baptisms shall not be excluded. These "divers baptisms" included the sprinkling of the blood of calves and goats upon the altar, and the sprinkling of the unclean with the "water of separation." In view of what follows in the 13th verse (where these sprinklings are actually specified with an unmistakable reference to the "divers washings" of the 10th verse), these sprinklings cannot be

excluded by any method of interpretation that has not an outside purpose to serve. So that you have here baptisms which at least included sprinklings, and which in the opinion of many scholars included nothing else—that is to say, you have the word "baptisms" used in a sense which is utterly inconsistent with the Baptist position, and which is perfectly consonant with our position.

Turn now to Mark vii. 4: "And when they come from the market-place, except they wash (literally, baptize) themselves, they eat not; and many other things there be which they have received to hold, washings (literally, baptizings) of cups and pots and brazen vessels" (R.V.). Here *baptizo* is translated "wash," which does not of necessity imply immersion. Baptists maintain that when the Pharisee came home from the market he took a bath, and that thus the Greek word has the meaning for which they contend. But he might have a bath without being immersed, and, as a matter of fact, baths were generally taken by having water poured upon the person. The Jews were notoriously economical in the use of water. But the plain statement is that "they wash themselves." Even the overtaxed ingenuity of Baptist controversialists cannot torture the English verb *wash* so as to make it mean immerse, and nothing but immerse.

In this connection take also Luke xi. 37, 38: "Now as He spake, a Pharisee asketh Him to

dine with him, and he went in and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it he marvelled that He had not first washed (literally, baptized) before dinner" (R.V.). It cannot be contended that baptize here means to immerse, because the Pharisees did not always immerse themselves before dinner, even if it be allowed that they did it when they came home from the market-place, and the Pharisee would not express surprise because our Lord failed to do what it was not customary to do. And even if it had been customary for Pharisees to immerse themselves before dinner in their own houses, such a thing could hardly be expected in the house of a host who had frequently several guests for dinner at the same time. The plain meaning is that our Lord had neglected to wash His hands before taking food, as was the custom of the Jews. Even in that case the Baptists will have it that the hands were dipped in order to be washed. But if hands are dipped in order that they may be washed (baptized), then dipping and baptizing are different things. Besides, the hands were not always dipped in order that they might be washed. The usual custom was to have water poured on the hands for this purpose. In accordance with this custom, Elisha is spoken of (2 Kings, iii. 11) as having poured water on the hands of Elijah. So that we have here two additional instances in which *baptizo* does not mean to

dip, and nothing but dip; and even if we had nothing further to say on the mode of Baptism, the Baptist contention is seen to be inadmissible.[1]

[1] For a further discussion of these three passages see the last lecture in this volume.

LECTURE II.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We continue our study of the subject of Baptism, still keeping to the question of Mode. It seems at first sight a somewhat curious circumstance that the mode in which the ordinance of Baptism should be administered in the Christian Church has not been specifically prescribed in the New Testament. We have, no doubt, references to Baptism which shed sufficient light on the subject, and which indicate, with sufficient clearness, the mode that is most significant and that is most completely in line with Old Testament ritual and Old Testament prophecy, but we have not, as in the case of the Lord's Supper, a detailed directory, giving full instructions as to the way in which the ordinance is to be administered. We have no less than four different accounts of the institution of the Supper in the New Testament, so that, whatever the practice of particular Churches may be in regard to the mode of observance of this great central ordinance of Christianity, the teaching of the Word of God in reference to this matter is clear and unmistakable. But in the case of Baptism we have not the same

definiteness of description and exposition. Why is this? Obviously because the Lord's Supper was a new institution. There was nothing exactly like it in the ritual of the Old Testament Church. It was necessary, therefore, that a word of explanation should be given in connection with its inauguration. But it was different with Baptism. That was a thing the Jewish people were familiar with. As we saw on last Sabbath evening, when referring to Hebrews ix. 10, there were "different baptisms," that is, different sprinklings or washings embraced in the ceremonial observances of the Jews. Water baptism was a common method of external purification. The prophet Ezekiel, when referring to the great work of cleansing and renewal that should characterize the rise and progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom, gives expression to a Divine promise in these words: "And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you" (Ezekiel xxxvi. 25). And the prophet's message was cast in this form because the sprinkling of clean water was a well-understood symbol of purification. There was no need to explain Baptism to a Jew in the time of our Lord. He knew what it was and he knew what it meant.

It is held by some that the Jews baptized the proselytes that accepted their faith and cast in their lot with them, and it is certain that the Baptism of Jewish proselytes was practised in the early cen-

turies of the Christian era, but it is not certain that it was practised before the time of Christ, and, therefore, we shall not refer to it in this connection, because we, at least, do not need to refer to anything that is doubtful, and we, at least, do not need to build on anything that is not solid rock.

Apart altogether, however, from this doubtful question of pre-Christian proselyte Baptism, the Jews understood perfectly well from their own ritual what Baptism was and what Baptism signified. They were not in the least surprised when John the Baptist began to baptize the crowds that waited upon his ministry, and they never thought of asking him for an explanation of the rite. It is spoken of as a matter of course. Indeed, it is evident that they expected both the Messiah and the Elijah who was to precede Him to baptize the people generally, and to introduce them to a life of greater purity and uprightness. The deputation of Jewish officials who waited on John the Baptist to find out who he was asked him (John i. 25) "Why, then, baptizest thou, if thou art not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?" thus implying that Baptism on a large scale—on a national scale—was expected in connection with the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom.

Having referred to the "baptisms" of the Old Economy, and having seen that these "baptisms" were in all cases "washings," in most cases "sprinklings," and perhaps in no case "immersions," and

having thus set aside the Baptist contention that baptism is "immersion, and nothing but immersion," and having thus vindicated the Scripturality of our own position that "sprinkling or pouring is sufficient," we proceed to consider what further light the Word of God has to give us in reference to this matter. The ritual baptisms of the Mosaic Law having been dealt with, we come in the natural and historical order to consider the question of John's Baptism.

JOHN'S BAPTISM.

It is hardly necessary to observe that John's Baptism indicated a purification preparatory to the coming of the Messiah. It did not make men disciples of Christ, but it committed them to an attitude of immediate expectation in reference to His coming, and it called them to a life of rightness in keeping with that attitude. The mission of the Baptist was to call the people to order and to lead them into a condition of preparedness in anticipation of the advent of their King. He was a great man, but he was overshadowed by a Greater. He did a great work, but it was simply subordinate and preparatory to the greater work by which it was followed. His Baptism was of Divine appointment, and so our Lord set upon it the seal of His approval by submitting to it, just as He submitted to all the other requirements of the Dispensation in which He lived, and which

came to a close when He offered Himself up upon the Cross. But as John was subordinate to Christ, and as his work was subordinate to Christ's work, so his Baptism was subordinate to the Baptism that Christ instituted. The Baptism that we are specially interested in is not John's Baptism but Christian Baptism. Of course we have some things to learn from John's Baptism, and especially from the Baptism of our Lord, and our present object is to find out what light John's Baptism sheds upon the mode in which the ordinance was administered.

A superficial examination of the passages that refer to John's Baptism might lead the ordinary uninstructed reader to imagine that John the Baptist was a Dipper, that he practised immersion wholesale, and that our Saviour Himself was immersed in the Jordan; but a closer and more careful study of these passages will show that this view cannot be sustained.

BAPTISM WITH WATER AND BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Let us turn now to the passages in connection with John's Baptism that seem to favour Immersionist views. Matthew iii. 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (R.V.).

See also Mark i. 8, and John i. 26, 31, 33. In all these passages it is only fair to say that the word translated "with" is the Greek preposition *en*, and Baptists say it ought to be translated "in." Thus the passage in Matthew would read: "I indeed baptize you in water. . . . He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire." But it would hardly savour of reverence to speak of baptizing anyone "in the Holy Ghost," and it is not a very happy idea that is expressed by baptizing "in fire." However, that is not the main consideration. It is well known that in Greek (especially in New Testament Greek where the writers were influenced by Hebrew forms of expression, and where *en* corresponds with the Hebrew *beth*, *with*) the dative, with or without the preposition *en*, is often used to express the instrument or the means by which anything is done, in which case it is called "the instrumental dative." Now, Greek scholarship, without an object to serve, has decided in this case against the Baptist contention, with an object to serve, and has decided that the rendering shall be "with" and not "in." Further, in each of the three passages—Luke iii. 16, Acts i. 5, and Acts xi. 16—the preposition *en* does not occur before the word translated "water," but it does occur in the other part of the sentence before the words translated "the Holy Ghost," and the preposition "with" is given in the translation in both places.

That is to say, the dative without *en* is just the same, in these instances, as the dative with *en,* and in both cases the right translation is "with." And Luke was a scholar and wrote good Greek. Even those who hold that *en* should be translated "in" are obliged to translate the dative without *en* by using "with." So that they have "with" before "water" in the first part of the sentence and "in" before "the Holy Ghost" in the last part of the sentence, thus: "I indeed baptize you with water but He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost and in fire." But such a translation is obviously ill-balanced, inelegant and inaccurate.

So much for the Greek; but everybody does not know Greek, and fortunately we can get at the right rendering in this case without knowing Greek. You know that the promise announced by John about the Baptism of the Holy Ghost was largely fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Baptism of the Spirit was given. And you know that on that occasion the disciples were baptized not "in" the Spirit, but "with" the Spirit. You know that the Spirit was then *poured forth,* as Peter explained, in accordance with a prediction of the prophet Joel. Further on in the course of his Pentecost address, Peter, speaking of the fulfilment of the promise of the Holy Ghost, says of Jesus that "He hath *poured forth* this which ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 33). The emblem of the Holy Spirit in the shape of "cloven

tongues like as of fire *sat upon* each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 3, 4). There you have both the sign and the thing signified. There you have the Baptism "with the Holy Ghost and with fire." There is not a solitary trace of Immersionism in the second chapter of the Acts, and, therefore, we are driven to the conclusion that there is not a solitary trace of Immersionism in the passages to which we have referred in connection with John's Baptism. For in these passages the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and the Baptism with water are joined together in such a way as to compel the conclusion that mode in the one case determines mode in the other case. And as there was a *pouring forth* on the day of Pentecost, so there must have been a *pouring forth* at the Jordan. Here the teaching of scholarship and the teaching of the Spirit are on one and the same side, and that is not the side of immersion.

BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN.

Another passage on which the Baptists take their stand with even greater confidence, if that were possible, is the passage in Mark which refers to the Baptism of our Lord (Mark i. 9): "And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John in the Jordan" (R.V.). This passage seems to favour the Baptist view. But here again Greek scholarship rises up in opposition to Baptist presumption.

The preposition translated "in" when it comes after a verb of motion, does not necessarily and does not usually mean "into." It does not necessarily mean more than *to* or *at*. So that the force of the Greek word by itself, and apart from every other consideration, will not carry us farther than the edge of the river, and will not allow us to say more than that Jesus was baptized *at* the Jordan. But we are told that the Revisers have kept to the word "in," and that what was good enough for them should be good enough for less scholarly students. Be it so. For my part I am perfectly satisfied with "in." I suppose it did not occur to any Baptist that our Lord might be baptized "in the Jordan" without *being in* the Jordan.

Let us look at this passage in the light of another passage of similar construction. The passage that is most to the point is John ix. 7: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Those who say that the correct rendering in Mark i. 9 is not "in the Jordan" but "into the Jordan," will please note that on the same principle the translation here should be "Go, wash into the pool of Siloam." The construction in both cases is precisely the same. It is necessary to say that the verb (*nipto*) which in John ix. 7 is translated "wash" is applied to the washing of a part of the body. It is plain that the man was sent to wash his eyes. He was not required to undress and go into the pool and immerse himself in order to save the Baptist situation.

He washed *at* the pool, or, if you like, he washed *in* the pool, but he did not *go into* the pool. And so Jesus was baptized at the Jordan, or, if you like, in the Jordan, but it does not follow that He went into the Jordan. Surely it is possible for one to wash his face in a river without going into the river himself. I think it is not necessary to say anything more in order to show that the words of Holy Scripture do not, of necessity, imply that our Lord went into the Jordan; and if they do not imply that, they are of no service to our Baptist friends.

But this is not all. We read in Mark i. 10, "And straightway coming up out of the water." That surely implies that he was in the water. No, it does not imply anything of the kind. The force of the Greek does not, of necessity, imply more than that He came up "from the water," as you have it in Matthew iii. 16 (R.V.). May I venture to say, for the benefit of any student who may be here, that there is a most scholarly and exhaustive and conclusive discussion of these passages and of the whole question of the Mode of Baptism in an article by Professor Moses Stuart in the *Biblical Repository* for April 1833?[1]

We have seen that the words used in reference to John's Baptism do not necessarily imply that our Lord or anyone else went into the river. But further, even if it could be proved, which it cannot, that our Lord went into the water, it does not follow

[1] See also Dr. Dale's *Johannic Baptism*.

that He was immersed. Suppose for a moment, for the sake of argument, that He did go in. Then it may have been that He stood in water up to the ankles, and that while in this position water was poured on His head. In the opinion of many of the commentators that is the way in which He was baptized. We have some very old representations of the act of Baptism. The earliest of these is a representation in fresco in the cemetery of St. Calixtus at Rome. This picture is believed by the highest authorities to belong to the second century. It represents the baptized person standing up to the ankles in shallow water, while the baptizer pours water on his head.[1] Many of you have, no doubt, seen pictures of the Baptism of our Lord in stained-glass windows, in which the Saviour is represented as standing in water up to the ankles, while the Baptist pours water on His head from something like a shell. These pictures are reproduced from very early representations of our Lord's Baptism. It may be interesting to know that similar representations are to be found carved on some of our old Irish stone crosses. The mode of Baptism thus represented is still practised in Syria by the Jacobites and Maronites, and they affirm that it has always been the Syrian custom.[2] In the Peshito, or Syriac Version of the New

[1] See Art. *Baptism*, in Smith and Cheetham's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, vol. i., pp. 168, 170.

[2] See Dr Bannerman's handbook, *Difficulties about Baptism*, p. 41.

Testament, which is one of the oldest translations extant, and which is admitted by those who are qualified to express an opinion on the subject, to be one of the most faithful and authentic of all the ancient versions, the Greek verb *baptizo* is translated by a verb which means *to make to stand,* although the Syriac has a verb which means to *dip* or *immerse.* The word which is used may refer to the attitude of the person baptized when the water was poured upon him ; or more likely it conveys the idea of confirming or establishing, leaving the mode of Baptism altogether out of account.

Having said so much in reference to the meaning of the words used, and having shown—(1) that the language does not, of necessity, imply that our Lord went into the water, and (2) that even if He did go into the river, it does not follow that He was immersed, we are now at liberty to take some note of the circumstances under which John's Baptism was administered.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF JOHN'S BAPTISM.

First of all, there is a difficulty for the Baptists in the great number of people that John baptized, for he baptized them all himself. He was not simply John the Baptist, but John the Baptizer. Suppose he baptized 300,000 people, and that is a very moderate estimate in view of the language

that is used, for we are told that "Jerusalem and all Judæa and all the region round about Jordan went out to him and were baptized of him" (Matthew iii. 5, 6); and suppose he dipped them at the rate of one every minute, which is more than we should have any right to expect, and suppose he worked ten hours a day, it would have taken him more than a year and a half to baptize them all if he did nothing else. But it is generally agreed that his whole ministry did not last more than a year, and a great many are of opinion that it did not last more than six months. So you see there would have been a difficulty in getting the crowds all dipped in time.

But leaving that difficulty aside, there are considerations of delicacy and decency which we cannot allow the Baptists to ignore. Did these crowds of people who came to hear John preach, and who responded to his appeal, and who submitted to his Baptism—did these crowds bring bathing dresses with them, or were such dresses provided by the Baptist who had difficulty enough in getting a dress for himself, or did they get dipped in their ordinary garments, or were they left to the only remaining alternative? I think it will be evident that there is a real difficulty here. Will the Baptists be good enough to tell us in what costume those mixed crowds of people were dipped by John in the Jordan? To suppose that they had bathing dresses is absurd. To suppose that they allowed

themselves to be dipped in their ordinary dresses is still more absurd, for the Jew knew very well how to take care of his health. We leave this little problem with our Baptist friends, that they may find some solution that will be in some degree consistent with the most rudimentary ideas of propriety.

But Baptists ask why the river was selected for the purpose of Baptism, and why John went to Ænon, where there was "much water" (literally "many waters," that is, "many springs or streams"), if his Baptism was only a matter of pouring or sprinkling. It is, of course, open to us to say that pouring, as well as immersion, could be practised at these places. But there are other considerations to be remembered. It is to be remembered that John the Baptist was not an ordinary man, and that he is not to be measured by ordinary standards. He lived away by himself in the solitudes, far from the abodes of men. He could not bring himself to put up with the petty peddling conventionalities of ordinary people, whose life could be hemmed in by four walls and a backyard. Away out on the Judæan hills he appreciated the freedom and the freshness and the largeness and the inspiration of Nature, where there was nothing to stunt his growth or hamper the development of his powers. Of course he had no property. He could not even boast of a well. He was not the man to put himself under an obli-

gation to anyone. But the Jordan and the streams of Ænon were free and fresh and flowing, and we can see from the type of man he was that he would prefer to baptize the people at these places, and at such places as these, even if he needed no more water than was sufficient for the purpose of pouring or sprinkling.[1]

It must also be remembered that the Jews had a preference for running water, or, as they called it, "living water," for the purpose of cleansing or purification. They had a very proper prejudice against standing or stagnant water. They believed that clean water was an appropriate symbol of purity. They had a different idea about water that was not clean. We can understand the idea that a Jew would have about a modern baptistery. You might get him to go into it if the water were clean and fresh, and if he were allowed to have the first dip. After that he would very properly beg to be excused. The Jewish preference for running water is another circumstance that helps to explain why John went to Jordan and Ænon for the purpose of baptizing those who accepted his teaching.

Besides, it is to be remembered that while John baptized at Jordan and Ænon, his are the only baptisms recorded that are mentioned as having

[1] Baptists do not dwell on the fact that John baptized "in the wilderness" (Mark i. 4), and "in Bethany (or Bethabara) beyond Jordan" (John i. 28, and x. 40).

taken place at a river.[1] And when we consider all the circumstances of the case, and think of the crowds he had to baptize, we can well understand why he preferred to take his stand at a place where there was an abundant supply of fresh water, even if he did not immerse, as we are convinced he did not immerse, one of the persons he baptized.

On the whole, we are taught by a careful study of the passages referring to John's Baptism that it cannot be proved by the language used that our Lord or anyone else ever set foot in Jordan for the purpose of Baptism. The mode of John's Baptism has not been explicitly defined, but the weight of evidence is decidedly, and, to my mind, decisively against immersion.

[1] Lydia and her household were evidently baptized at the river-side, although this is not specifically stated (Acts xvi. 13-15).

LECTURE III.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We continue our study of the Word of God with the view of finding out what further light it sheds on the mode in which the ordinance of Baptism was administered. Up to this point we have followed what we may call the historical method of investigation—that is to say, we have prosecuted our inquiry in the order of time and in the order of development, going away back into the past as far as the light of Scripture truth will carry us, and then coming down toward the present from that starting-place, still keeping in the light which does not lead astray. We have not seen our way to follow the example of the Baptists in this matter, by ignoring the Old Testament and shutting out the light which the Old Testament gives, because we still cling to the old Presbyterian prejudice that the Old Testament is a part of the Bible. We hold that the Old Testament leads up to the New Testament, and that the New Testament cannot be properly understood apart from the Old Testament. No one who has even the ordinary instincts of an ordinary student, not to

speak of the enlightened instincts of an enlightened student of Holy Scripture, will be guilty of the barbarity of arbitrarily ruling the past out of court in a case in which the past is directly concerned, and of refusing the light which the past cannot be kept from giving. We, at least, have no interest in keeping back any part of the light. We are open to the light on every side. We have not a blind window in the back specially constructed to block all the light which the Old Testament sheds on the subject of Baptism. We hail the light from every quarter. We know our ground, and we are confident that the more light we have on this subject the more completely will our position be vindicated.

We have considered the ritual baptisms or purifications of the Mosaic law referred to in Hebrews ix. 10, and we have seen that they were effected in most cases by sprinkling, and that it is not in evidence that any one of them was effected by immersion. We have studied the accounts and reviewed the circumstances of John's Baptism, and we have proved that the doctrine of immersion and nothing but immersion has no footing there. Still keeping to the historical method we come to the baptisms performed by the disciples of our Lord while He was with them in the flesh. Reference is made to these baptisms in John iii. 22: "After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them

and baptized." Also in John iv. 1, 2: "When, therefore, the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples) He left Judæa and departed into Galilee." I may observe, in passing, that the apparent inconsistency between those two passages is easily explained. In the one place it is said simply that He "baptized." In the other place it is said that He "was baptizing," although He Himself "baptized not, but His disciples." The meaning obviously is that the disciples baptized with His sanction and by His authority. He accepted responsibility for what His agents did, because He had confidence in them. As Dr. Godet says—"The moral act alone belonged to Jesus; the material operation was done by His disciples."[1] There is nothing stated in reference to this Baptism by the disciples of Jesus that would throw any additional light on the question of Mode. It seems to have had pretty much the same significance as John's Baptism, and to have been, like it, a preparatory purifying rite binding to repentance. For, it is to be remembered that, like John's Baptism, it belonged to the Old Dispensation. It was not Christian Baptism, for Christian Baptism belongs to the New Dispensation—the Dispensation that was ushered in by the Resurrection of our Lord. As you know, it was after the Resurrection that the

[1] *Commentary on John*, vol. ii. p. 89.

great Commission, which contains the "marching orders" of the Church, was issued. It is found in Matthew xxviii. 19, 20: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." That Commission constitutes Baptism an ordinance of the Christian Church. That is to say, our Lord laid hold of a rite that was already in use, a rite that had been in use for ages as part of the Jewish ceremonial, a rite with which His disciples and the people generally were perfectly familiar. He laid hold of that rite and appropriated it to a new use, and impressed upon it a new significance. The Commission does not define the mode of Baptism, for no such definition was needed by those to whom it was immediately given. Therefore, we cannot gather anything from it that is pertinent to our present purpose, which is to discover what may be learned from Scripture in regard to the question of Mode in Baptism.

But while the Commission, in itself and by itself, does not give us much help in our present inquiry, we can learn something from the way in which the Apostles proceeded to carry out the instructions which it conveyed. In obedience to the command of their risen Lord they went forth in His name, after they had been endued with power from on

high, and began to make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them. The story of their labours, in so far as it has been preserved to us, is given in the book of the Acts. We shall now turn to the instances of Christian Baptism recorded by the writer of the Acts that throw any light directly or indirectly on the mode in which the ordinance was administered, and allow them to say all that is in them in reference to this particular point.

BAPTISM OF THE THREE THOUSAND.

The first case that claims our attention is that of the converts who were baptized on the day of Pentecost. You know that the Spirit was given in great plenitude on that day, and that under the influence of the Spirit Peter delivered an address of overwhelming power to the assembled multitude, and vast numbers of people were moved to the very depths of their being by the eloquence and earnestness and intensity of the inspired orator, and put themselves in his hands and in the hands of the other Apostles, and were received into the fellowship of the disciples. We read in Acts ii. 41, "They that received his word were baptized, and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." Here were three thousand people baptized in a single day, or rather in part of a single day, for we do not know how long Peter's address and his many other words of teaching and exhortation occupied. In all likelihood it was the

afternoon before any Baptism took place. At any rate the day must have been considerably advanced. If you divide the three thousand over the twelve Apostles, you get two hundred and fifty for each of them to baptize, and if the ordinance were administered by dipping, after the manner of modern Baptists, it will be seen that they had each a very heavy day's work.

But that is not the difficulty in this case that gives most trouble to the Baptists. The difficulty is to find a place or places about Jerusalem suitable for the immersion of so many people. For Jerusalem, although in some respects like our own city, was unlike Derry in this respect: that it was not built upon a river like the Foyle, and had not a place so admirably adapted for dipping purposes as Rosses Bay. We have it on the highest authority that there was no public place at or near Jerusalem where even a much smaller number of people than three thousand could have been immersed.[1] There is no river and there is no lake. The brook Kidron that is mentioned in various places in the Bible is nothing more than the dry bed of a wintry torrent. There is no stream in this channel unless during the heavy rains of winter, when the waters descend into it from the neighbouring hills. Even in winter there is no constant flow, and people have been known to live at Jerusalem for years with their

[1] See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Arts. *Jerusalem* and *Kidron, The Brook*.

eyes open without ever seeing a stream in this little water-course. And Pentecost was not in winter. It occurred at the same time as our Whit Sunday—seven weeks after Easter—that is to say, towards the end of May or in the beginning of June. At that time there would not be a drop of water in the brook. The only spring that is known is called the "Virgin's Fountain." It is connected with the Upper Pool of Siloam, into which it occasionally overflows. The only well of any account is at the junction of the Kidron and Hinnom Valleys, and is 125 feet deep. It may be supposed that no dipping was done there.

But it may be asked, "How was the city supplied with water?" for it was fairly well supplied. There was sufficient water for ordinary use in private houses and for special use at the Temple, where frequent ceremonial ablutions took place. The chief supply of the inhabitants must have been rain water, collected and stored in cisterns, in winter. Then little reservoirs or pools were made for catching the surface drainage, but there were only a few of these. The water required in the Temple was, for the most part, conveyed from a distance by aqueducts and stored in subterranean reservoirs. In some cases also the water used in private houses was conveyed from a distance in the same way and preserved in tanks, so that the situation was something like this:—Immersion could not have taken place out-

side the city and convenient to it unless the pools had been used for that purpose. In that case hundreds of people must have been dipped in the same pool, and the water must have been anything but tempting, and anything but a symbol of purity, before the last person was dipped. In fact it must have been in such a state that no Jew would allow himself to be immersed in it. Besides, the people of Jerusalem would not have tolerated the pollution of the pools, which were part of the city supply, any more than we would tolerate the pollution of the reservoirs from which our supply is drawn. It is perfectly certain that the three thousand were not dipped outside Jerusalem, and it is just as certain that they were not dipped inside Jerusalem. The Temple water was not available for immersion, not even for the immersion of the priests, still less was it available for the immersion of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Nor was the water in private houses available for this purpose. You may take it that most of the converts were strangers. The Jerusalem Jews, with their invincible pride and their impenetrable prejudice, were uncompromisingly hostile to the new teaching. Their brethren of the Dispersion were more likely to be influenced by Gospel truth. It is not in the least likely that the people of Jerusalem placed their cisterns and tanks, which they valued so highly, at the disposal of these schismatics, as they must have regarded them, at

any time, but especially at the beginning of summer, when they had the prospect of several months of drought.

The idea of immersion in this case is perfectly preposterous, and cannot, in view of the facts, be entertained for a moment by anyone who is blessed with even a trace of sanity. And that was the time for immersion, if ever immersion was to be practised, and especially if it was to be considered essential to the right administration of the ordinance, for that was the first instance of Christian Baptism. The fact is, Immersionism breaks down at the very outset when well-informed Common-Sense looks it steadily in the face. A very intelligent member of my Bible-class suggested a miracle by way of saving the situation for the Baptists. It was, in the circumstances, appropriate to a degree, and showed that he had a perfect appreciation of the requirements of the case. The only difficulty in the way of that suggestion is that nothing of the kind seems to have occurred to the writer of the Acts. So that the difficulty of finding a dipping-place for the new converts remains unsolved and untouched. "Where," we ask, "were these three thousand people dipped?" and Echo answers "Where?"

BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

The next case we come to is that of the Ethiopian nobleman, whose Baptism is recorded in Acts

viii. 36-39—"And as they went on the way they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." This quotation, like the others, is from the Revised Version. The 37th verse of the Authorised Version is omitted as being no part of the sacred text. This at first sight looks like a case of immersion, and Dr. Carson finds so much encouragement in these words that he regards this one passage as sufficient to prove his case. It may be observed that this is the only instance of Christian Baptism from which the Baptists attempt to draw even the appearance of support for their theory of exclusive immersion. But all that we said last Sabbath evening about the Baptism of our Lord at the Jordan applies here—that is to say, it does not necessarily follow from the force of the words used that either Philip or the eunuch went into a body of water and came up out of that body of water after being in it. I need not go over the ground traversed last Sabbath evening. It will be enough to say that the language does not necessarily imply more than that they went down *to* the water and came up *from* the water. If, for the sake of argument, it be conceded that they did actually go into the water, it does not necessarily follow that

the eunuch was immersed? It would be quite sufficient if he stood in water up to the ankles and had the element poured on his head after the manner in which, according to many of the commentators, our Lord Himself was baptized. But the evidence against immersion in this case is even stronger than in the case of our Lord. For immersion would have been possible in the Jordan, but there was no place near the way through the desert that is here described where immersion could have been performed. Dr. Stokes, who favours immersion as the normal idea in a warm Eastern climate, says in his exposition of the Acts—"The Ethiopian eunuch, baptized by St. Philip in the wilderness, could not have been immersed."[1] That is the opinion of all who know anything about the geography of the place. The language that is used in reference to this case does not imply immersion, and the circumstances of the case positively exclude immersion. We are perfectly convinced that the eunuch was not immersed.

BAPTISM OF PAUL.

The next case of Baptism we come to is that of Paul, recorded in Acts ix. 18—"And he arose and was baptized," and referred to in Acts xxii. 16—"Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." It is evident that Paul was baptized in his lodgings

[1] On the Acts of the Apostles in *The Expositor's Bible*, vol. i., p. 143.

in Damascus, and that the dominant idea in his mind and in the mind of Ananias at the time was not the idea of immersion but that of washing.

BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS AND OTHERS.

The Baptism of Cornelius and those who were in his house is referred to in Acts x. 47, 48—"Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid the water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ;" also in Acts xi. 15, 16—"And as I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the Word of the Lord how that He said John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." The first thing that calls for notice here is the expression, "Can any man forbid the water?" That implies that the water was brought to the persons and certainly not that the persons were taken to the water and dipped into it. It must also be noticed in connection with this Baptism that "the Holy Ghost *fell on* all them which heard the Word" and that "on the Gentiles also was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost," as we learn from Acts x. 44, 45. Some visible emblem of the Holy Spirit came down upon Cornelius and the others who were present, just as the dove descended on Jesus at the Jordan, and just as the emblem of tongues like as of fire

"sat upon" each of the disciples on the day of Pentecost. There was, to begin with, in this case a Baptism of the Spirit accompanied by some outward and visible manifestation, in which something emblematical of the Spirit was "poured out" upon those who heard the Word through Peter. Now, if there was a pouring out of an emblem of the Spirit in the one Baptism, why should there not be a pouring out of the water, which is an emblem of the Spirit, in the other Baptism? The evidence in this case also is decidedly against immersion.

BAPTISM OF LYDIA AND HER HOUSEHOLD.

We come now to the Baptism of Lydia recorded in Acts xvi. 15, "And when she was baptized and her household she besought us saying: If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us." We learn from the context that there was a prayer-meeting by the river side, near to Philippi, that Paul addressed the women who were present at the meeting, that Lydia received the message that he brought, and that she and her household were straightway baptized. It is evident that they were baptized at the river side (although this is not distinctly stated) after Paul's address and before Lydia returned to her house. Will the Baptists have the hardihood to tell us that this respectable Eastern lady of good position

was immersed, without previous preparation, at a public place, by a man she had never seen before? Such a thing would be a flagrant violation of the customs and usages of the East, where women have always been retiring in their habits. And Paul, who "became all things to all men," where no principle was involved, "that he might by all means save some," was not the man to do unnecessary violence to these feelings of delicacy, that were carefully guarded and cherished, in order to make converts. Besides, Paul himself had very strict ideas about the modesty of carriage and demeanour that was proper to women. We learn from 1 Corinthians xi. 13, that he would not allow a woman to pray to God "unveiled," as it is in the Revised Version. Is it likely that Paul, with his rigid ideas of propriety, would be so far inconsistent with what he has elsewhere shown himself to be, as to immerse this lady in a public place and in the presence of a public meeting? Most certainly not, for whatever Paul was he was consistent. Even his enemies could not charge him with inconsistency. Beyond all shadow of doubt Lydia was not immersed. Even if we had not another case but this one it would in itself be sufficient to dispose of the Baptist contention that Baptism is "immersion and nothing but immersion."

BAPTISM OF THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

There is only one other case that we have to refer to, and that is the case of the jailer at Philippi and his household, which is recorded in Acts xvi. 33, 34: "And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. And he brought them up into his house, and set meat before them, and rejoiced greatly with all his house, having believed in God." It is quite plain that the jailer and his household were baptized somewhere within the precincts of the prison, for they were baptized immediately after the way of salvation had been fully explained, and before Paul and Silas had been brought up into the jailer's house. It can hardly be contended that there was any facility for immersion in this Roman prison. There was not even a bath. The cleanliness that is characteristic of the modern prison was altogether unknown in ancient times. The consideration that is now extended to prisoners is an outcome of the Christianity for which Paul and Silas suffered at Philippi. The jailer and his household could not have been immersed, because there was no provision that could have been made at midnight for such a performance. So that we are driven to the conclusion in this case, as in the others, that the evidence against immersion is decisive.

What is the net result of our study of these passages? It is just this, that it cannot be proved that in a solitary instance the Apostles and their co-workers understood Baptism to mean immersion. The Baptist, in order to vindicate his position, has to prove beyond doubt that Baptism in every case was by immersion. If we can show that in any one case Baptism was not by immersion, the Baptist contention is overthrown. Now I think we have shown that, not in one case only, but in every case, the evidence is decidedly against immersion. For my part, I am satisfied that not one of these cases of Christian Baptism that we have examined gives any countenance to the doctrine of Baptism by "immersion and nothing but immersion."

LECTURE IV.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

In previous lectures we have carefully examined the greater part of the New Testament record in so far as it bears upon the question of Mode in Baptism, and we have seen that there is not, so far as we have gone, any foundation in Scripture for the doctrine that mode is of the essence of the ordinance, and that it is rightly administered only when immersion, and nothing but immersion, is used. The fact that immersion not only cannot be proved, but cannot even be shown to be probable, in connection with any one of the instances of Christian Baptism recorded, is significant, in this relation, up to the point of demonstration. For, as we have already pointed out, the Baptist contention requires that immersion shall be established beyond the shadow of a doubt in every case. If there were nine hundred and ninety-nine cases in which immersion took place for a certainty, and if after that there were one case in which it did not take place for a certainty, then that one case would be sufficient to disprove the Baptist allegation that Baptism

is immersion, and nothing but immersion. Now, we have examined every case that can throw any light on this question of Mode, and we have shown that, in view of the facts, not one of them can even be tortured into giving any testimony in favour of immersion, not to speak of exclusive immersion.

At this point we might fairly enough say that our work is done, and that the Baptist position, so far as this particular aspect of the question is concerned, has been completely overthrown. But as there are still some considerations on which our Immersionist friends rely, and as we have a conclusive and crushing reply to every argument they can advance, it will be well to prosecute our inquiry still further, and investigate some passages of Scripture still outstanding, with the view of discovering whether there is, on New Testament ground, any remaining refuge within which the now discredited doctrine of exclusive immersion can find for itself a happy hiding-place where it shall be safe from the shafts of truth to which it has been exposed, and from which it has suffered more than it can afford to bear.

BAPTISM INTO CHRIST.

We turn, in the first place, to two passages of Scripture which the Baptists regard as conclusive on their side of the controversy, Romans vi. 3, 4: "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were

baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? We were buried, therefore, with Him through Baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Colossians ii. 12: "Having been buried with Him in Baptism, wherein (or rather, 'In whom') ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." A superficial reading of these passages might lead the ordinary reader to suppose that Baptism is a burial, and that being a burial it must be performed by immersion, which is the only mode in which burial can have anything like emblematic representation. But a superficial reading of Scripture, and especially a superficial reading of Paul's Epistles, is not enough to enable even the most careful reader to grasp the truth that is expressed, in all its richness and fulness. It is never safe to study a text or a passage by itself and apart from the context in which it occurs, and it is never safe to elevate what is incidental and subordinate to the level of what is dominant and essential. If the truth is to be seen as truth it must be looked at in its right relations and in its true proportions. Turning now to the verses quoted from Romans, let us first of all try to see what is the scope of the passage in which these verses occur.

You will notice that the Apostle is dealing with

an objection to the doctrine of justification by faith. The objection is this : If a man is justified by faith apart from works, what is to keep him from continuing in sin ? If grace abounds over sin in securing the pardon and acceptance of the sinner, what is to keep him from continuing in sin that grace may continue to abound ? What shall we say then ? " Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? " That is the question that the Apostle asks in the first verse of the chapter, and which he proceeds to answer in the second verse. " God forbid. We who died to sin how shall we any longer live therein ? " The Apostle's answer to those who say that the believer may continue in sin after justification is that such a thing cannot be, inasmuch as he died to sin. And how did he die to sin ? Through his oneness with Christ. In a way that is peculiarly Pauline, the believer is represented as having died with Christ, as having been buried with Christ, and as having risen again with Christ. That is to say, there is on the part of the believer an ideal participation in the death and burial and resurrection of our Lord. Not only so, but there is in his own experience, in virtue of his union with Christ, a counterpart of the Saviour's death and resurrection. He died to sin, and has risen into a new life of righteousness. He does not continue in sin. He has broken with sin. He has ceased to serve sin and has begun to serve Christ. Now, I want you

to notice that the two outstanding words on which the Apostle rings the changes throughout this whole passage up to the end of the eleventh verse are the words "death" and "life." The Saviour died and lives. The believer, in virtue of his union with the Saviour, died and lives. The burial that is spoken of is purely incidental and subordinate. Burial is only death sealed and certified. There is nothing in burial that was not already in death. You will see that the reference to burial which appears in the fourth verse disappears in the fifth, eighth, tenth, and eleventh verses. In these verses death without burial is equivalent to death followed by burial in the fourth verse. The gist of the whole passage is that the believer does not continue in sin, because he died to sin and has entered upon a new life in which sin is not the dominant power. And that change has come through union with Christ.

But how did the believer come to be united with Christ? By Baptism, we are told. "All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death." And what kind of Baptism is it that brings us into union with Christ? Clearly not water Baptism. Union with Christ is completely independent of water Baptism. A man may be united to Christ who has never been baptized with water, and, on the other hand, one who has been baptized with water—yes, and one who has been immersed in water—may not be united to Christ.

Therefore, the Baptism of the third verse is not water Baptism but the Baptism of the Spirit. In the passage from Colossians the Baptism that is spoken of is identified with Circumcision, the "Circumcision not made with hands," and, therefore, spiritual. In Galatians iii. 27, we read: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." This shows us that it is the Baptism of the Spirit that is referred to, for nothing short of Spirit Baptism leads to the "putting on" of Christ in sanctification. Indeed that is plainly stated in 1 Corinthians xii. 13: "For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body." To say that by water Baptism we are baptized into Christ is to teach Baptismal Regeneration. It is not to be wondered at that some of the more ignorant Baptists have the idea that immersion brings salvation. The loose and unguarded and unscriptural interpretation of this passage in Romans that is common in Baptist circles is largely responsible for the existence of this erroneous view. Taking into account the whole scope of the Apostle's argument, and bearing in mind the significance of expressions and ideas that are distinctly Pauline, we are driven to the conclusion that the Baptism by which we are baptized into Christ and into the death of Christ is not water Baptism but the Baptism of the Spirit.

Granting, however, that the reference is to Spirit Baptism, is there an allusion to water Baptism, and in particular is there an allusion to the

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GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

mode in which water Baptism was administered, and is the allusion such as to imply that immersion was the mode which the Apostle had before his mind when he penned these words? There is a difference of opinion in relation to this matter among the commentators. I could give you names on both sides if that would be of any service, but I think you will excuse me if I pass by the names and proceed to put before you as briefly and clearly as possible the view that commends itself to my own judgment, and the considerations which seem to justify that view. For my part I do not admit that there is any allusion whatever to immersion in either of the passages under consideration. Let us look carefully into the fuller passage of the two (that from Romans), not with borrowed eyes but with our own eyes. First of all it is said that certain Christians were "baptized into Christ." There is no Immersionism there. Christians are not immersed into Christ. Then it is said that they were "baptized into His death." There is no suggestion of immersion there. It cannot be contended that Baptism by immersion has any resemblance to the death of Christ. The Saviour was not drowned. He died on the Cross. And dipping has no resemblance to death by crucifixion. Then we have an inference indicated and introduced by the word "therefore." "We were buried, therefore, with Him through Baptism into death," that is, "into His death." Burial with Christ is here said

to be a consequence of Baptism into His death, so that Baptism into His death precedes burial with Him. Burial is, therefore, subsequent to Baptism, and not contemporaneous with it. It is not a part of the baptismal process, but a result of this process considered as complete. And what comes after the Baptism that is here spoken of cannot properly have symbolical representation in the ordinance of Baptism to which there is supposed to be an allusion. The great fact on which the Apostle lays stress in the passage is Baptism into Christ's death, which does not admit of being symbolized by immersion. As Stuart suggests, the idea of burial is introduced here "merely for the sake of rendering more striking the image of a *resurrection* which the Apostle employs in the other part of the antithesis. A *resurrection from the grave* is a natural phrase when one is speaking with respect to the subject of a resurrection."[1] You will note that it is not Baptism into Christ's grave that is emphasized, but Baptism into Christ's death. Burial is inferential and subordinate. Now, I ask, why should the inference from the main fact be deemed worthy of emblematic representation in Baptism when the fact itself receives no such representation? Why should the ineffective subordinate be honoured when the effective superior has been passed over? If symbolism must have an object, let it not pass by an object that is important for

[1] *Commentary on Romans.*

the sake of one that is of little account. Of course Baptism signifies a great deal that it does not symbolize, as you will see by referring to the excellent definition of Baptism that is given in the Shorter Catechism. It is not in the least necessary that the symbolism of Baptism should cover all that is implied in the ordinance.

If Baptism is an emblem of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, as the Baptists maintain, it is a strange thing that there is no direct reference to this aspect of the ordinance in the New Testament. If the leading object of Baptism —the object that determines the mode in which it is to be administered—is to symbolize the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, surely a truth of so much importance would be worthy of something more explicit than a couple of indirect and incidental figurative allusions. There is no uncertainty in reference to the ordinance that does in reality symbolize the Saviour's death. We are not left to elucidate a metaphor in order to discover the mode in which the Sacrament of the Supper should be observed. In this connection we have directions that leave nothing to be desired in point of fulness and clearness and definiteness. And if Baptism had been intended to supplement something that was defective in the Supper, and to symbolize the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord, we have no doubt that this object would have been stated on its own account, and with unmistakable plainness and precision.

We have seen that immersion cannot be a symbol of the Saviour's death, because it does not suggest crucifixion. We might go farther and say that it cannot, in strictness, be a symbol of the Saviour's burial, because the body of our Lord was not lowered into a grave after the manner of interment that we are familiar with. It was placed in a receptacle (*loculus*) prepared for such a purpose in the wall of a rock chamber or tomb which had never been used before. Immersion would not suggest burial to the Jews or Greeks or Romans, or, indeed, to any of the Christians to whom the Epistles to the Romans and the Colossians were, in the first instance, addressed.

But, apart from this difficulty, there is a difficulty in combining, without confusion, the two emblems that, according to the Immersionists, are united in the act of Baptism. Baptism is beyond all question a symbol of purification. That is recognised by the Baptists as well as ourselves. But in addition to this, and in supremacy to this, the Baptists hold that it is a symbol of burial. That is to say, it is at one and the same time a symbolic washing and a symbolic burial. But it is obvious that these two emblems are inconsistent with each other, and cannot properly be associated in the same symbolic act. As Dr. Wilson observes, "The washing of Baptism cannot coalesce with the corruption of burial."[1] And why should this impossible exten-

[1] *Infant Baptism*, p 303.

sion of the symbolism of Baptism be attempted? Why should purification and burial be thus violently forced together in an unequal yoke? Why should it be considered necessary to make Baptism encroach on the province of the sister Sacrament? The death of Christ is symbolically brought before us in the Sacrament of the Supper, and does not need further symbolical representation. It is the purifying work of the Holy Spirit that is symbolically brought before us in the Sacrament of Baptism. As we have seen, it is the work of the Spirit that is referred to in the two controverted passages in Romans and Colossians. In this connection it is worthy of note that the Sacrament of the Supper was instituted in immediate view of our Lord's death, to which reference was made at the time, and that the Sacrament of Baptism was instituted in immediate view of the gift of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, to which reference was made, by implication, at the time. For no discipling or baptizing was to be done until the Holy Spirit should be given, and from that time on to the end of the world Christ promised to be present by His Spirit with His Church, in connection with the discipling, baptizing and teaching of the nations. Both Sacraments are of perpetual obligation. One is to be observed "till He come," the other is to continue "to the end of the world." Each has its own province. One has reference to the work of Christ, the other has reference to the

work of the Spirit. Therefore we prefer the natural and rational and Scriptural view, which restricts the symbolism of Baptism to the purifying work of the Holy Spirit, leaving to the symbolism of the Supper what can be emblematically represented in connection with the death of our Lord.

BAPTISM UNTO MOSES.

There are two other passages of Scripture to which I shall very briefly refer. The first of these is 1 Corinthians x. 1, 2: "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant how that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The reference here is not, of course, to Christian Baptism, and so this passage might have been noticed earlier; but it will be convenient to take it in close proximity to the other passage that remains to be considered. The one thing that is clear in connection with this Baptism is that it was not an immersion. Dr. Carson says the Israelites got a "dry dip." This shows us to what extremities he is driven in order to accommodate his theory to the facts. But the absurdity of this suggestion is apparent on the face of it. We do not know how the Israelites were baptized in the Red Sea. We know from Exodus xiv. 19-22, that they went over on dry ground. It is suggested that they were baptized by the spray from the sea and by the rain that fell on

them as they were crossing. It is supposed, and the supposition seems to be justified, that there is a reference to this in Psalm lxxvii. 16-20: "The waters saw Thee, O God; the waters saw Thee. They were afraid; the depths also trembled. The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound; Thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of Thy thunder was in the whirlwind; the lightnings lightened the world; the earth trembled and shook. Thy way was in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps were not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." At any rate one thing is certain, and that is, that the Israelites were not immersed. That distinction was reserved for the Egyptians. So that in this case the baptized were not immersed, and the immersed were not baptized.

ANTITYPE BAPTISM.

The other passage is 1 Peter iii. 20, 21: "Wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved through water; which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even Baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience towards God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." In this case also those who were immersed perished, and those who were not immersed were saved. The safety of Noah and his family answers to the salvation secured by

Baptism, that is, Spirit Baptism. The water, by influencing Noah and his household to go into the one place of safety, saved them. And the Baptism that is symbolized by water—not water Baptism but Spirit Baptism—influences men and brings them into Christ, and in Him, and through His resurrection and by His Spirit, they are lifted up into newness of life, as the ark, by being lifted up, lifted up those who were in it.

IMMERSIONISM INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

Thus we have examined all the Scripture references that might be supposed to throw any light on the question of Mode in Baptism, and the result of our investigation, which, I venture to think, has been conducted in a spirit of fairness, is, that we cannot find in the Word of God any basis whatever for the doctrine that Baptism is immersion, and nothing but immersion. And that is only what we should expect. We live in these days under the Dispensation of the Spirit, and enjoy a freedom from the bondage of form which was unknown under the Old Economy. It would have been inconsistent with the breadth and freedom that are characteristic of the Gospel Dispensation to bind men down to one particular form in the external mode of an external rite. And we have seen that, as a matter of fact, no such yoke of bondage has been placed on the neck of Christ's

people. And where Christ has left us free we shall not permit men to bind us with their earth-born traditions and their earth-born theories. Those in whom the slave spirit has found a home may submit to an exclusiveness in outward form that is destitute of Scriptural sanction, but those who have risen to the stature of a higher Christian manhood will not tolerate a tyranny that cannot invent a decent apology for its existence. We hear a good deal in these days about Ritualism and its doings. What is Ritualism? Ritualism is largely an undue attachment to the outward rites of religion which leads men to lose sight of its inward spirit. Immersionism is Ritualism as far as it goes, and Ritualism of the worst type. And after the manner of Ritualism it leads, in many cases, to the magnifying of what is outward and formal, and the minimizing of what is inward and spiritual. Thus Immersionism, in its practical outcome, shows itself to be so far alien to that vigorous and healthy spirituality which is characteristic of the highest type of Christian life.

IMMERSIONISM OFTEN IMPRACTICABLE.

There are many other points on which one might dwell, but we must bring this lecture to a close. We might show, for example, that Immersionism is not adapted to a religion that is to become universal. It would not be practicable in the Soudan, where water is scarce. It would not be

practicable in Greenland, where water is not always water, but where it is always cold to the point of discomfort. It would not be practicable in the case of those who are delicate or sick. I have heard of at least one case in which a fatal illness was induced by a mid-winter immersion. A respected minister of our Church who now fills a Professor's chair, and fills it well, told me that on one occasion he was asked to baptize an old man who was on his death-bed, and near the end of his journey. The man, unfortunately for himself, had been brought up in the neighbourhood of a Baptist congregation, and through neglect had never been baptized. As he lay on the bed from which he did not expect to rise, and as he thought of his relation to Christ, he was greatly troubled in spirit because he had not been baptized. He had no superstitious views about Baptism. He did not believe that it would save him. But as a disciple of Christ he was anxious to submit to the ordinance of Christ. In such a case Baptism was not only justifiable but necessary, but it could not have been performed by immersion. Immersion and nothing but immersion would have broken down completely in the face of a searching situation like that. The man was baptized by sprinkling, and after the administration of the ordinance he had great peace of mind. Two hours afterwards he passed within the veil.

THE TESTIMONY OF ANTIQUITY.

The testimony of antiquity is sometimes appealed to in favour of immersion, but the testimony of antiquity favours a great many things that the Word of God does not favour. The testimony of antiquity has something to say in favour of immersion, but not in favour of exclusive immersion. No doubt immersion was practised from an early time, but sprinkling or pouring was practised all along. It has been stated that immersion was the only mode of Baptism practised for 1300 years. That statement has been circulated in this city; but it is not a statement of fact. It cannot be proved, as we have seen, that there was any such thing as immersion in the Apostolic age. In a document called *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,* which was discovered some years ago, and which belongs to the end of the first or the beginning of the second century, there is a directory for the administration of Baptism. In this directory provision is made for Baptism by pouring.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

It has been stated that the Westminster Assembly was divided on the question of Mode in Baptism, and that twenty-five voted for sprinkling and twenty-four for immersion. That statement also has been circulated in this city; but it also is not a statement of fact. What happened was this:—

The members of the Assembly were agreed that sprinkling or pouring was lawful. On that point there was no division, but there was a division as to whether dipping should be mentioned in the Directory as also a lawful mode. Twenty-five were opposed to dipping in any shape or form. Twenty-four were in favour of dipping being mentioned, not as an exclusive mode, but as an allowable mode. That, however, was not held to be a determining vote. The matter was recommitted and brought up again next day, when, after some deliberation, the wording that appears in the Directory for Baptism, as we have it, was adopted apparently without a vote.[1]

[1] See Works of Rev. John Lightfoot D.D. (Lond. 1824), Vol. xiii., pp. 299-301.

LECTURE V.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM—*concluded.* THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—INTRODUCTORY.

In previous lectures we have dealt with the question of Mode in Baptism. We have shown, and shown conclusively, that there is no foundation in Scripture for the doctrine that Baptism is immersion, and nothing but immersion. We have seen that the Baptist contention for modal exclusiveness is not sustained by the use of *baptizo* in the Classics; is not sustained by the nature of the Levitical and Pharisaic baptisms to which reference is made in the New Testament; is not sustained by the practice of John the Baptist; is not sustained by any one of the recorded instances of Christian Baptism; is not sustained by subsequent New Testament references; and is not sustained by the testimony of antiquity. It is no reply to say that immersion was the practice of the ancient Church. The practice of the ancient Church is not the rule of faith for Presbyterians. But even the practice of the ancient Church, notwithstanding early deviations from Apostolic freedom and simplicity, was not exclusive immersion, and,

therefore, does not conform to the requirements of the Baptist case. It is not a reply to quote statements about the prevalence of immersion which do not refer to exclusive immersion. It is not a reply to give the names of more or less distinguished men who were in favour of immersion as an allowable mode, but who were not in favour of immersion as an exclusive mode. Why that, as I have stated again and again, is our own position. I do not know that there is anyone who holds that immersion is unlawful. At any rate our position is, that immersion is lawful, that pouring is lawful, and that sprinkling is lawful. We hold that the essence of the ordinance, so far as administration is concerned, is the application of water to the person baptized, and that the mode of application is a matter of indifference. But the admission of a man who holds that immersion is *a* lawful mode cannot, in fairness, be represented as the contention of a man who holds that immersion is the *only* lawful mode. And yet this is a favourite artifice with the lower type of Immersionist.

BAPTIST QUOTATION.

In this connection we give a pertinent quotation from Dr. Witherow's little handbook. He says:—

"Now, of these well-known facts Anabaptist writers are constantly taking an unfair advantage. They find many theologians who admit that dipping was an ancient and Scriptural mode of Baptism, just as they believe pouring

to have been an ancient and a Scriptural mode. In these circumstances one of the most common devices of Anabaptist writers (I mean, of course, the smaller fry—such men as Carson were above it), is to extract sentences from the works of Pædobaptist writers in which they speak favourably of immersion, taking good care to conceal, at the same time, that these writers believed that Baptism by pouring was no less Scriptural and valid. They seek to convey the impression to the unwary and ignorant by quoting half truths from great authors, that the whole Christian world is on their side, only that from some unworthy motives they did not act up to their convictions." [1]

To put forward as in favour of the Baptist position of immersion and nothing but immersion, the names of men who were in favour of pouring or sprinkling as well as immersion, and who, as a matter of fact, preferred pouring or sprinkling to immersion, is to betray gross ignorance or to descend to downright dishonesty, and the cause that needs to defend itself with such weapons is a cause that, to say the least of it, is in rather a bad way.

ANABAPTISTS AND IMMERSION.

An ex-Moderator of the Church of Scotland has been brought forward to prove that Infant Baptism led to Baptism by sprinkling. If the bare *ipse dixit* of an ex-Moderator is sufficient proof for Baptists that is their own affair; but Presbyterians must be excused if they prefer to have a more substantial basis for their convictions. As a set-off

[1] *Scriptural Baptism: Its Mode and Subjects*, pp. 28, 29.

against the statement—the absolutely unsupported and absolutely unfounded statement—that Infant Baptism led to Baptism by sprinkling, I venture to submit a simple statement of fact. It is a matter of history that the Anabaptists, as the Baptists were originally called, did not, for a considerable number of years after their first appearance in the sixteenth century, baptize by immersion, and it is said that they were led to adopt immersion and to insist on it as a necessity with the view of putting an end to Infant Baptism. In this connection I may be permitted to give you an extract from a work by the Rev. Robert Baillie, one of the members of the Westminster Assembly, minister at Glasgow and afterwards Principal of the University of Glasgow. He says :—

"Among the new inventions of the late Anabaptists, there is none which with greater animosity they set on foot than the necessity of dipping over head and ears—than the nullity of affusion and sprinkling in the administration of Baptism. Among the old Anabaptists, or those over the sea to this day, so far as I can learn by their writs or any relation that has yet come to my ears, the question of dipping and sprinkling came never upon the table. As I take it, they dip none ; but all whom they baptize they sprinkle, in the same manner as is our custom. The question about the necessity of dipping seems to be taken up only the other year by the Anabaptists in England as a point which alone, as they conceive, is able to carry their desire of exterminating Infant Baptism ; for they know that parents upon no consideration will be content to hazard the life of their tender infants by plunging them over head and ears in a cold river. Let us, therefore, consider if this sparkle of new light have any derivation from the lamp

of the Sanctuary, or the Sun of righteousness, if it be according to Scriptural truth or any good reason."[1]

This question is exhaustively discussed in a volume[2] recently published by an eminent American Baptist, Mr. W. H. Whitsitt, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. President Whitsitt proves that the Anabaptists generally were not, at first, Immersionists, that the Anabaptists in England did not practise immersion before the year 1641, and that immersion was an innovation and a departure from the original practice of the Anabaptists. As might have been expected, this Baptist author was rather roughly handled by his Baptist brethren for his unaccountable indiscretion in acknowledging a fact that, according to the approved Baptist tactics, should have been kept a profound secret.

It would appear that, according to the Bishop of London, the coldness of our climate is responsible for the universality of sprinkling. I have been informed by a respected citizen of Derry that a Baptist movement which originated in this city after the Revival of 1859 came to an untimely end, and that subsequently the English organ of the denomination had an explanatory paragraph, which

[1] *Anabaptism* (Lond. 1647), c. vii., p. 163.

[2] *A Question in Baptist History—Whether the Anabaptists in England practised Immersion before the Year* 1641? (Louisville Ky., Charles T. Dearing, 1896.)

he read, attributing the collapse of the Londonderry mission to "the wetness of the climate and dissensions among the brethren." Verily our Anti-Baptist climate has much to answer for. And it is said that there are climates which, from the Immersionist standpoint, are even viler than ours. Surely this inclemency of climate must be an invention of the Evil One to interfere with the spread of Baptist principles, and so retard the coming of the Kingdom. At this point, I think, we may, with great propriety, take leave, for the present, of the question of immersion.

SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—POSITION DEFINED.

We come now to deal with the other department of the subject that remains to be investigated—the Subjects of Baptism. The Mode of Baptism having been considered, the more important question arises, Who are to be baptized? And here, as before, it will be well, at the outset, to define our position. For, as in relation to the question of Mode, we admit the lawfulness of immersion side by side with the lawfulness of pouring or sprinkling, so, in relation to the question of Subjects, we hold the rightness and the necessity of baptizing those who, not having been baptized in infancy, are led to make, on their own responsibility, a profession of faith in Christ, side by side with the rightness and the necessity of baptizing the infant children of those who are in the membership of the Church. That

is to say, we baptize professing believers who wish to enter the fellowship of the Church, and we baptize the children of professing believers who are in the fellowship of the Church. The Baptism of adults is not a common occurrence with us in the home section of the Church, because nearly all of those to whom we minister have been brought up under, at least, some degree of Christian influence, and have been baptized in infancy. Sometimes, however, cases of adult Baptism occur. I have had three or four cases of it in the course of my own ministry.

But in the mission field I am happy to say that such cases occur in hundreds. You will see by the circular placed in the pews to-day [1] in reference to the work of the Foreign Mission of our Church that in connection with our Indian Mission 122 adults were received into the Church by Baptism during the first ten months of the year. In China the number of baptisms for the year ending 1st May 1898 was about 2000, and this year the number must be still greater. I am pleased to find that my old college friend, Mr Fulton, who is labouring in China, and who is one of the most effective of our effective foreign missionaries, baptized no less than 469 persons in the course of his last missionary journey. Many of these, and probably most of these, were adults. When our missionaries speak of baptisms they naturally give

[1] January 15th, 1899.

most prominence to the Baptism of adults, and sometimes they speak of the Baptism of households. That is exactly what we find in connection with the missionary labours of the Apostles as recorded in the New Testament, and that is exactly what we should expect. Thus it will be seen that we baptize infants where, as we shall show, infants ought to be baptized, and that we baptize others where others ought to be baptized.

The phrase "infant sprinkling," by which our Baptist friends, with that excess of charity which is characteristic of the more select spirits among them, describe our Baptism, is, therefore, as inadequate as it is impertinent, and, from their standpoint, would require to be supplemented by at least a fraction of the phrase "believers' Baptism," by which, with that excess of modesty which is also characteristic, they are accustomed to describe their own immersions. But, in truth, we repudiate both phrases as being inaccurate and misleading, because we baptize more than infants and they immerse more than believers. I suppose one may be permitted the distant suggestion that some of the "believers" who are immersed are not believers. Or, are we to take it that the Baptist Church is an exception —an impossible exception—to all the Churches in Christendom? At any rate, we are not so presumptuous as to speak of "believers' Baptism" in connection with the administration of the ordinance in the Presbyterian Church, not that I think our

members lag far behind their neighbours in respect of the marks of discipleship, but that we are scrupulously anxious to keep well within the limits of the truth in describing our members and our ordinances. Hence we speak not of "believers," but of professing believers, and not of "believers' Baptism" but of the Baptism of professing believers. The only difference here, in point of description, between our Baptist friends and ourselves is that we call a professing believer a professing believer, and they call a professing believer a "believer."

With this explanation we may proceed to note that the Baptists, in common with ourselves, baptize professing believers who have never been baptized before (I am not now speaking of Baptist proselytes who may have been baptized in infancy), while we baptize not only professing believers who have never been baptized before, but the infant children of professing believers who are in the membership of the Church. In this matter, as in the matter of Mode, the Baptist stands for exclusiveness. He insists on exclusive immersion, and he insists on the exclusive immersion of professing believers exclusively. On the other hand we stand in both cases for liberty, the liberty which is as wide, and only as wide, as the revealed will of God.

The Baptist conception of the visible Church differs from ours. I am sure I do not need to remind you that the "invisible Church" is the Church as it is in the sight of God or the collec-

tive company of all true saints, and that the "visible Church" is the Church as it is in the sight of men, or, as we hold, the collective company of all who profess the true religion and their children. Now, the Baptists hold that the Church visible consists only of professing believers. The children who are not old enough to make a profession of faith have no Church standing in the Baptist communion. The sheep are carefully folded, but the lambs are kept outside. It is this difference of view as to the constitution of the visible Church that gives rise to the difference of view that exists between the Baptists and ourselves in regard to the Subjects of Baptism, because Baptism is immediately and directly related to the constitution of the visible Church, and is the ordinance by which those who are entitled to the privilege are received into the fellowship of the visible Church.

BAPTIST INDIVIDUALISM.

Now, I think there is something to be said at this point by way of objecting to this rigid Individualism which is characteristic of the Baptist denomination, and which prevents Church recognition of children. It is not found in the State. It is not found in our civic arrangements. It is not found in society. The family and not the individual is the social unit. Society is made up of families. Nations are made up of families. The

world is made up of families. If it were not made up of families it should soon cease to be. The child from birth has a recognised position in the State. He enjoys the recognition, and protection and guardianship of the State from the first. If a foreign Power, through one of its agents, were to lay an unfriendly hand on any infant born of British parents in the most obscure region of the earth the whole resources of the British Empire would instantly be available to right the wrong that had been perpetrated on a British subject. The State recognises children—infant children. The State insists that every child of every subject shall be suitably nourished and clothed and educated, to the end that, when he comes to take his place as a citizen he may be able to discharge the duties of citizenship with advantage to himself and to the community at large. And surely, on the ground of analogy, there is at least a presumption that the Church, as a Church, should have some way of recognising the children born to its members, and surely the children, as the children of Church members, should have some recognised place and some recognised position within the pale of the Church. That is, if we may presume so far as to suppose that the Church, in its care for the well-being of the young, should not be, in any respect, behind the State. Of course the Church is spiritual and the State is natural. But the truly spiritual and the truly natural are alike from God, and

there is no reason why the spiritual should be unnatural. In the ideal condition of things to which we look forward the spiritual shall be natural and the natural shall be spiritual.

We may observe, too, that in the arrangements of Divine Providence children are bound up with their parents. They participate with their parents in the privileges and advantages and pleasures and in the privations and hardships and troubles that come to the home. Not only so, but in many cases the parent acts for the child, and is regarded as the rightful representative of the child, and the child is bound by the act of his parents until he is in a position to act for himself. Of course this is part of the Providential order under which we live. Thus we see that the principle by which the parent represents the child when he is unable to represent himself is embedded, by Divine appointment, in human life, and plays a very large part in the formation of human character and the determination of human destiny. We shall see in the course of this inquiry that this great principle has received prominent recognition in all God's dealings with men in the unfolding and fulfilment of His great purpose of redemption.

MODE OF DETERMINING THE QUESTION.

So much in a general way. But coming now to close quarters with this question as to the Church position of children, which divides the Baptists

from ourselves, let us think for a moment of the way in which the question is to be determined. For it is a question as to the Church status of the children of parents who are in the membership of the Church, and as to the recognition, on the part of the Church, of that Church status by the appropriate ordinance. The question, in brief, is this: Have the infant children of professedly believing parents a right to a place in the visible Church, and is it the duty of the Church to recognise that right and to receive such children into its fellowship in the only way they can be received, that is by Baptism? How is this question to be determined? Of course our appeal must be to the Word of God, and our Baptist friends are ready to prescribe the precise form in which the matter must be settled. They take it upon themselves to say that God's will, in this regard, should be revealed according to their prescription. They want a text. And if they cannot have a text they practically say that they will not be satisfied with anything else, or at least they do not show themselves disposed to look patiently at anything else. Now, I am not going to undervalue the importance of texts. They are all important, and they are all sufficiently important to be considered in their proper setting and in their proper connection. But I think that the method of presenting isolated and dislocated texts in proof of great doctrinal principles is somewhat out of date. I think there is something still more

important than texts, even when they are rightly considered and rightly construed. If we can find a great, broad fundamental principle running all through the Word of God, if we find that that principle reveals itself again and again in the arrangements that God has seen fit to make for the uplifting of human life, if we find that that principle has been distinctly enunciated in connection with the initiation of the great forward movements that stand out as landmarks in the progress, among men, of the Kingdom that is from above, and that, in the mercy of our God, is yet to be universal—universal in its comprehensiveness and in its supremacy—if, I say, we can find a principle like that, then we have something more important than a text, something that will dominate and illumine many a text, and something that will give men more insight into the will of God, and more guidance in regard to Church practice and the administration of Church ordinances, to which it is relevant, than any single text or passage of Scripture could be expected to do.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REPRESENTATION.

We claim that there is, in Scripture, such a principle that bears immediately and directly upon the question in hand, and that is the Principle of Representation, the principle in accordance with which God deals with men through a representative, the principle in accordance with which God

deals with families as families through their representatives or heads. That principle, we believe, binds up parents and children together, and makes over to them the benefits of the New Covenant together, and gives them Church standing together. In this way it comes to bear on the question of baptizing the infant children of Church members. And in order to get a grasp of this great governing principle, in this connection, we go away back to the time of Abraham, and to the time when God was pleased to enter into Covenant relationship with Abraham, and to give him a sign and a seal of the Covenant in which He pledged Himself to be a God to him and to his seed, and in which He revealed a great purpose of love to mankind in general. The Baptist may object to this plan of procedure, but if we are to submit to God's will we must first of all find out what God's will is, and if we are to find out what God's will is we must be content to look for it just where God has been pleased to make it known, and to receive it just as it has been conveyed. It does not look very like submission to God's will to prescribe the particular way in which God shall declare Himself, if His declaration is to be honoured with Baptist acceptance. Most of the Baptists seem to think that we ought to begin our discussion of this question at the Commission, apparently on the ground that the past is irrelevant. But, in the nature of things, some part of the past is always

relevant to the present, and in order to understand the Commission aright, it is necessary to go back into the past and look at what led up to it, and what would inevitably dominate and determine the interpretation of it by the Jewish minds, to which it was immediately addressed. Moreover, the Baptist does not ignore the past in his discussion of the question of Mode. He goes away back into the Classics, as far, at least, as his scholarship will carry him, that he may get light on the meaning of *baptizo*, and that he may be the better able to show what meaning he considers it to have in the Commission. Of course this is the correct method. But if he allows himself the liberty of this method in discussing the question of Mode he must allow us the liberty of the same method in discussing the more important question of Subjects. In all such cases the historical method is the scientific method and the proper method, and the method that, when rightly followed, is most likely to lead to the apprehension of the truth. We have followed that method in the other department of this inquiry, and we have arrived at the truth. We shall continue to follow it in the department of the subject into which we have now come, and which we mean to investigate as far as may be necessary ; and we do not doubt that, here too, we shall be conducted along the leading line to the goal of truth, which it is our one desire to reach.

But it may be asked: Why go back as far as Abraham, and why no farther? We go back to Abraham and no farther, because Abraham stands at the beginning, so far as our present purpose is concerned. We have to deal in our present inquiry with the constitution of the visible Church, and the call of Abraham marks the beginning of the Church visible. No doubt God had His saints in the world before the time of Abraham, but they were not, previous to his time, brought together in one continuous visible community. Clearly enough Abraham stands at the place where we must begin our investigation of this question, and accordingly we begin with Abraham.

LECTURE VI.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We have seen that Baptism is directly related to the constitution of the visible Church. It is the ordinance in which membership in the visible Church is visibly recognised. So that the question as to the Subjects of Baptism resolves itself into a question as to the constitution of the visible Church. And in order to learn what the Scriptures teach—for that is, and has been, our great concern throughout the whole course of this investigation, not what this man says, or what that man says, or what the other man says, but what the Scriptures say—in order to learn what the Scriptures teach in regard to the constitution of the visible Church we go away back to the time when the visible Church began to take shape as a distinct community, having in it the promise and the potency of continuity and development, and when the great Charter, under which the visible Church began and continued, and continues to be, was formally granted and formally accepted; that is to say, we go away back to the time of Abraham and of the Abrahamic Covenant. It may be said that any

argument drawn from the Abrahamic Covenant is far-fetched, and should, therefore, be regarded with some degree of suspicion, but, as we shall find in a little, the Apostles Peter and Paul did not think an argument drawn from the Abrahamic Covenant was either far-fetched or questionable, and so long as we have the company and the countenance of the Apostles, and so long as our method of procedure is distinctly and demonstrably Apostolic, we shall even bear with the disapproval of those who do not agree with us, and who do not agree with the Apostles.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Beginning, then, with the Abrahamic Covenant, it will be pertinent to observe at the outset that that Covenant concerns itself, not merely with the material welfare of a single nation, but with the spiritual well-being of the whole human race. No doubt privileges and blessings were conveyed to Abraham and to his descendants, but the ultimate object contemplated was the conveyance of blessing through Abraham and his descendants to all the families of the earth. It was not for his own sake merely, and it was not for the sake of his descendants merely, that God called Abraham and entered into covenant relationship with him. It was in order that He might reach away out through him and them to the race at large, and bless all men every-

where with the blessing of His salvation. The promise was not only "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee" (Genesis xvii. 7), but also "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis xii. 3). The Covenant was dominated by a great spiritual purpose, in pursuance of which it sought to convey the greatest possible blessing to the greatest possible number. Everything else was subordinate to that. The descendants of Abraham were to be as numerous as the stars of heaven, and the Land of Canaan was to be given to them for a possession. But the earthly inheritance promised and secured by the Covenant, however largely it might bulk in the view of those who did not appreciate aright the perspective of grace, was a very secondary consideration. The great thing aimed at was the bringing of men into a right relation to God and into a rightness of life corresponding to that rightness of relation.

In the words that introduce the record of the Covenant transaction we are told that God appeared to Abraham and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before Me and be thou perfect" (Genesis xvii. 1). This shows us that the immediate object in view when the Covenant was formulated and ratified was to lift men up into a life of godliness and rectitude, and so help them to attain to the height of their possibilities. And to this end God pledged Himself in the Covenant to be a God to Abraham

and to his seed, and to bless all men through him and them. These considerations are sufficient to show that the predominant element in the Covenant was spiritual, and that it sought to promote inward enrichment rather than outward enlargement.

The promise of blessing to all the families of the earth included the coming and work of Christ, and all that has been done and is to be done by His Church, under the inspiration and guidance of His Spirit, for the uplifting and betterment of human kind. All that was potentially embraced in the Covenant. Hence we read in Galatians iii. 8, of "the Gospel" that was preached beforehand unto Abraham, saying: "In thee shall all the nations be blessed." In Acts ii. 39 we find Peter saying: "To you is the promise and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." The promise here spoken of is evidently the promise made to Abraham, embracing himself, his seed, and all the families of the earth, as will be seen from a reference in the very next recorded address of Peter given in the very next chapter, Acts iii. 25, 26: "Ye are sons of the prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up His Servant, sent Him to bless you in turning away every one of you from your iniquities." According to this

testimony, the Abrahamic Covenant had reference to Christ, in whom the promise of universal blessing is fulfilled, and the blessing which He has rendered available operates in turning men away from sin. Similarly, in Acts xiii. 32, 33, Paul says: "And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers how that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children in that He raised up Jesus." And again in Acts xxvi. 6, 7: "And now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain." In Romans xv. 8, 9, we read: "Christ hath been made a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God that He might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy." And in Galatians iii. 29: "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise."

In these passages "the promise" referred to is the promise made to Abraham and fulfilled in Christ. These Scriptures and others that might be quoted in this connection will help us to appreciate the reach and scope of the Abrahamic Covenant. It was beyond all question the Covenant of Grace, or a revelation of the Covenant of Grace in relation to Abraham and to those whom he represented. So that the Covenant is still in force, and in that Covenant God still pledges

Himself to be a God to His people and to their seed. It is the Covenant on which the visible Church was founded at the first, and it is the Covenant on which the visible Church still stands. The promise of the Abrahamic Covenant is still fulfilling itself in the Dispensation of the Spirit, as men are reached and helped by the Gospel of Christ and brought into the fellowship of His Church and made partakers of the blessings He bestows. The Abrahamic Covenant is the title deed of the Church in all ages.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COVENANT.

This brings us to consider the administration of the Covenant. If the blessings of the Covenant were to find their way into the unnumbered lives they were intended to reach and rectify and renew, it was necessary that they should be received and transmitted by human agency and through a human organization. It has pleased God to ordain that men shall be blessed through their fellowmen. And so the formulating of the Covenant was accompanied by the founding of an appropriate community, by which the Covenant blessings should be received and disseminated and transmitted. That community was related to the Covenant, and owed its existence to the Covenant, and was held together by the Covenant, and every member of it accepted the Covenant and received the sign and seal of the Covenant. That visible

community was the visible Church. It was made up of those who, under the Covenant, had taken God to be their God either personally or representatively. Membership in this Church was recognised by the rite of Circumcision, the sign and seal of the Covenant. Now, Circumcision had reference to the whole Covenant and not to a part of it only. It could not otherwise have been the seal of the Covenant. Sometimes it is said there were two Covenants, one national and the other spiritual, and that Circumcision had reference to the national Covenant but not to the spiritual. There is no foundation in Scripture for such a division. It may at times be convenient to speak of the national aspect of the Covenant as distinguished from its spiritual aspect, but, whatever provisional distinctions of this kind we may draw, the Covenant was one and the seal was one.

Dr. Carson speaks of "the letter of the Covenant" and "the spirit of the Covenant." But it is obvious that the Covenant includes both the letter and the spirit. These and similar devices have been resorted to by those who wish to eliminate all spiritual significance from the rite of Circumcision. All such attempts have failed and must fail. Circumcision was not a mark of carnal descent, inasmuch as it was administered to proselytes, and they were not descended from Abraham. Neither was it a sign of the national aspect of the Covenant to the exclusion of the spiritual aspect, because it

was administered for hundreds of years before the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when the Israelitish people attained to the status of nationhood. The Covenant, as we have seen, was essentially spiritual, and, as a matter of fact, Circumcision had primary reference to the spiritual aspect of it. No one could be circumcised with exclusive reference to the national aspect of the Covenant. In the act of submitting to Circumcision he took God to be his God, and pledged himself to be one of God's people —that is to say, he made a profession of faith and obedience. And a similar profession was made by the parent on behalf of every child to whom the ordinance was administered. Circumcision had a spiritual import. Like Baptism, it was a symbol of purification. It signified the removal of defilement. In Colossians ii. 11, the Apostle describes the Circumcision of the Spirit, of which ordinary Circumcision was a symbol, as "the putting off of the body of the flesh." In Romans iii. 11, we read: "And he received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision." In Deuteronomy x. 16, xxx. 6, and Jeremiah iv. 4, we read of the Circumcision of the heart, by which the people were inwardly renewed, and enabled to live in the fear of God and keep His commandments.

Thus it will be seen that Circumcision was a spiritual ordinance; spiritual in its reference and spiritual in its significance, just as the corre-

sponding ordinance of Baptism is in the New Testament Church. It may be said that it did not, in every case, secure or attest the spiritual efficacy which it is held to signify. That is true. And it is true, at the same time, that it did not, in every case, secure or attest the secular efficacy that, according to the Baptists, exhausts its significance, for many of those to whom it was administered were not permitted to have any share in the Land of Canaan. We may add that Baptism, even when administered by immersion, does not, in every case, secure or attest the spiritual efficacy which it signifies. The visible Church under the Old Dispensation, like the visible Church under the present Dispensation, was somewhat less than ideal. Then, as now, Church members were not, in many cases, what they professed to be. All were not Israel who were of Israel. There was the distinction between Israel after the flesh and Israel after the Spirit. But that distinction could not be drawn by any human hand, and could not be indicated by any process of human exclusion. It is impossible to have in this world any Church which shall consist exclusively of those who are the true people of God. God has not seen fit to bestow upon even the choicest of His saints such a gift of spiritual discrimination as would qualify them to draw an unerring line of separation between the false and the true. We are bound to regard and to treat as members of the visible Church many

who may not be members of the body of Christ. And so in the olden time many were, by Divine command, regarded and treated as members of the visible Church who were not circumcised in heart, and in whom there did not dwell a right spirit.

CHILDREN IN THE COVENANT AND IN THE CHURCH.

We do not need to dwell on the fact that children were included in the Abrahamic Covenant, for that cannot be denied, and we do not need to occupy your time in proving that children were in the membership of the Old Testament Church, and that their Church-membership was recognised by the rite of Circumcision, for that cannot be disputed. But before passing on I should like to ask your attention to two passages of Scripture in which children are distinctly specified as having a place in the Church.

When the people of Israel came to the border of the Promised Land, which they were at last about to enter, they renewed their Covenant engagements with their Covenant God, and we find the old leader who had led them for many a weary year through the weary wilderness, and who was about to be their leader no longer, we find Moses addressing them in the words of Deuteronomy xxix. 10-13 : "You stand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in the

midst of thy camps, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water: that thou shouldest enter into the Covenant of the Lord thy God, and into His oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that He may establish thee this day unto Himself for a people, and that He may be unto thee a God, as He spake unto thee, and as He sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." There you see the "little ones" had a recognised place in the Congregation, or the Church—"the Church in the wilderness" (Acts vii. 38)—and a recognised place in the Covenant.

The other passage is found in Joel ii. 15, 16: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the people, sanctify the Congregation, assemble the old men, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts." Here infants are expressly mentioned as having a place in the Congregation, and as being among the number of God's covenanted people. It will hardly be contended that this "solemn assembly"—this sanctified Congregation, which was convened, by Divine command, for the special purpose of uniting the hearts of the people under the leadership of "the priests, the ministers of the Lord," in earnest supplication to Almighty God, and in which the so-called "unconscious babes" formed an element that was deemed important enough to be accorded specific mention under the urgent imperatives of

convocation—it will hardly be contended that this assembly met under circumstances of the most intense solemnity for the purpose of offering a prayer for mercy that expressed the supreme desire of every worshipper—it will hardly be contended that the presence of the infants in that assembly deprived it of all spiritual character and all spiritual purpose, and degraded it to the level of a political convention designed to foster and to further "carnal" ends. There is a very general impression that the presence of infants usually operates in the opposite direction, and evokes all that is best in human nature. There is no need to say another word in reference to this point. It is perfectly plain that the infants of those who professed to be God's people were in the Church, and were by Divine command recognised as members of the Church from the days of Abraham down to the close of the Old Economy.

THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION.

This brings us to the Apostolic Commission, in which, as we have seen, the ordinance of Christian Baptism was instituted. In accordance with the terms of that Commission, the Apostles were to "make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matthew xxviii. 19, 20). Considered by itself, the grammatical con-

struction of the Commission would lead us to infer that disciples are to be made by Baptism and teaching. It is well to note this fact, because some of the Baptists, in their anxiety to get hold of something somewhere that will have the semblance of argument, tell us that, according to the construction, the order is—Make disciples, then baptize the disciples that have been made, and then teach the disciples that have been made and baptized. All we have to say in reference to this contention is that it is grammatically untenable. The construction is—Make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them, that is, by baptizing them and teaching them.

But, without dwelling on this point, we pass on to consider the bearing of the Commission on the Church-membership of infants. And first of all let us think of the way in which a Jew would understand it, because it was addressed to Jews, men who were familiar with Jewish observances, who were accustomed to Jewish ways of thinking, and who naturally looked at things from a Jewish standpoint, and it is to be noted that they were never cautioned against being misled by their Jewish predilections. It was virtually a command to these Jews to go forth and make proselytes of all the nations. At any rate, that is the idea that would naturally arise in the minds of the Apostles in connection with the command to make disciples. Now, when a proselyte went over to Judaism and was received into the Church, as it then was, he

took his infant children with him, where there were such, and they were, by Divine command, recognised as being in the membership of the Church. In these circumstances it would not have occurred to the Apostles to ignore the infant children of those who were received into the fellowship of the Church. Nothing short of a specific command would have justified such a momentous departure from the Divinely-appointed usage in this matter. The infant children of Church members were in the membership of the Church down to the very moment the Apostles were furnished with their Commission. Were they to understand that this command in itself initiated a new policy of restriction in regard to Church-membership? There was no restriction anywhere else. There had been sufficient restriction in the past. The restriction of the Dispensation that had just passed away was not to be still more restricted. The dominant note of the New Dispensation was universality. All the nations were to be discipled. "Make disciples of all the nations," not "Make disciples from among all the nations," but "Make disciples of all the nations." I do not know how all the nations were to be discipled if the children were overlooked. The children have a place in the nation. The children are an important part of the nation. It would be a somewhat imperfect process of discipling that would set itself to lay hold of the old and the middle-aged and those who

are just entering upon manhood and womanhood while taking no note of the young children and the infants, for whom life still waits with its vast and unbroken store of potentialities and possibilities, and who are most susceptible to the influences that Christianity can command. Why, even from the standpoint of worldly prudence, the children are the most important element to be considered, especially the children of parents who have embraced the Christian faith. When we think of what the children under Christian influences may become and of what they may do, even as children, for Christ and His cause, it is easy to see that it would be an unpardonable mistake not to take possession of them from the very first in Christ's name and enlist them in the ranks of His disciples, and recognise their place in His Church, and train them for Him and for His service.

If the Church that entered upon a new career when the Apostolic Commission was issued was to be the Church of the future, it was necessary that the children should be recognised, that their rights under the Abrahamic Covenant, which Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil, should be preserved, and that they should have at least as good a place in the Church of the New Dispensation as they had in the Church of the Dispensation that had passed away. To impoverish the membership of the Church by a wholesale excommunication of the children, to mutilate the Church by a ruthless excision of the

most vital part of the body-corporate, and to undermine the constitution of the Church by draining it of its richest blood, would not be suggestive of a great forward movement, and would not occur to most people in connection with the inauguration of a magnificent enterprise for the discipling of the nations. Are we to suppose that there was to be a suicidal restriction in one direction side by side with a vigorous expansion in all other directions? Are we to suppose that one promise of the Abrahamic Covenant was to become inoperative just at the time when another promise of that Covenant was entering upon a glorious fulfilment? Are we to suppose that the promise "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed," as understood and fulfilled in the past, ceased to have validity just when the promise "In Thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed," was about to have its validity vindicated as it had never been vindicated before? Certainly not; especially when we find the Apostle Peter a few days afterwards referring to both these promises in the passages already quoted (Acts ii. 39, and iii. 25, 26), in connection with the discipling of the nations that began on the day of Pentecost. Baptist writers try to maintain that "the promise" referred to ("To you is the promise and to your children") in Acts ii. 39, is not the promise made to Abraham, but the promise of the Holy Spirit given in the book of Joel. But the two promises are perfectly consistent with each other. The pro-

mise made to Abraham was finding fulfilment in the gift of the Holy Spirit. The identity of "To you and to your children" with "To thee and to thy seed" is undeniable, and settles the matter in favour of the earlier promise. Peter himself is entitled to a vote on this question, and his vote is recorded in favour of the Abrahamic reference in Acts iii. 25. The Apostles were constantly harking back to "the promise"; that is, as they explain, the promise made to Abraham. In the face of these facts we cannot and we dare not for a moment entertain the idea that the Apostolic Commission, with its world-wide comprehensiveness, is to be understood as driving the children outside the Church with a Baptist "scourge of cords."

CHILDREN MAY BE DISCIPLES.

But we are told that the idea of discipleship excludes that of infancy, and that an infant cannot be a disciple. If the term disciple is to be interpreted by the "jargon of the schools," if by disciple we are to understand one who, after the manner of the Greeks, attached himself to a particular philosopher and set himself to master a particular system of philosophy, then, obviously, an infant could not be a disciple. But that is not our understanding of discipleship in the school of Christ. The disciple of Christ has not to master a system of philosophy. A disciple is a learner, and the disciple of Christ has to learn to be Christ-

like. That is the kind of scholarship he acquires, and that is a kind of scholarship that may begin, and, as a matter of fact, does often begin, in the days of infancy. Indeed, that is the time it must begin if it is to make the most rapid progress, and if it is to rise to the highest stage of attainment. Many of the most distinguished servants of the Master have commenced their discipleship sooner than they can remember. They cannot remember the time when Christian influences came upon them and took possession of them and began to mould them after the pattern of Christ. They can never think of a time when their life did not tend Christward. They have grown up toward Christ as naturally as the plant grows up toward the light. And that should be the normal condition of things in every Christian home. Of course that is not what we always find, because we who are parents are not always what we ought to be. Whatever else children and infant children may or may not be able to learn, they can learn from the very beginning to be like Christ if they find themselves in a Christian atmosphere and under the formative power of Christian influence.

Thus we see that the discipling of the nations does not rule the infant children of Church members outside the pale of the Church. The discipling of infants is not only a feasible thing, but is about the most hopeful form of Christian work that any follower of the Master can put his hand

to. Given Christian parents who will surrender themselves in downright earnest to the duty of discipling their infant child, and who will surround him from the first, and continuously, with the beneficent influence of Christian example, and who will subject him from the first and continuously to the beneficent discipline of Christian training, and I will build more on the Christian future of that infant than on the Christian future of the adult who has not had the advantage of Baptism in infancy, and who has not had the advantage of that distinctive parental devotion that the baptismal service is calculated and intended to secure. We come to the conclusion that there is room for infants inside the Apostolic Commission—that the Commission, considered by itself and apart from everything else, not only does not exclude infants from the ranks of discipleship, but actually provides a place for them in the school of Christ, and that the Commission, when studied in the light of the Abrahamic Covenant, which leads up to it and to which it is directly related, necessitates the continuance, under the Gospel Dispensation, of the Church-membership of the infant children of Church members and of the recognition of that membership in the ordinance of Baptism.

LECTURE VII.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We have seen that the Abrahamic Covenant is still in force, and that its promises are still finding fulfilment, and must continue to find fulfilment so long as men are reached and blessed through the ministry of the Gospel of the grace of God. The inauguration of the Mosaic Economy and the institution of the Levitical system in connection with the Sinaitic Covenant did not disannul it, as we learn from Galatians iii. 17: "A Covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect." Nor was it set aside by the new and better Covenant predicted in Jeremiah xxi. 31-34, and applied to the Christian Economy in Hebrews viii. 8-12. The New Covenant superseded and made an end of all that was transitory and shadowy in the Old or Sinaitic Covenant, but neither the one nor the other abrogated or modified the Abrahamic Covenant, or impaired the validity of the Abrahamic promises. The Mosaic Economy was simply a provision for administering the Abrahamic Covenant

and fulfilling the Abrahamic promises, and the Christian Economy is simply a better provision, and the best provision that can be made, for administering the Abrahamic Covenant and fulfilling the Abrahamic promises. So that the Covenant is still in force, and the promises of the Covenant are still valid. We have seen that, under that Covenant, the children of Church members were in the membership of the Church, and were, by Divine command, recognised as being in the membership of the Church from the days of Abraham down to the close of the Mosaic Economy. We have seen that the Discipling Commission, as given in the closing verses of Matthew's Gospel, not only does not set aside the Church-membership of children, but actually necessitates its continuance, while the recognition rite of Baptism takes the place of the recognition rite of Circumcision. The Covenant and the Covenant promises continue, but a new seal has been provided, and, so far, the children remain in undisturbed possession of all the rights the Covenant secures to them.

THE PREACHING COMMISSION.

But we are reminded that there is another Commission, and a Commission that is altogether to the Baptist liking, in Mark xvi. 15, 16: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be con-

demned." This passage is regarded as the sheet-anchor of the Baptist position, and has, perhaps, been forced to do more for the cause of Baptist proselytism than any other misinterpreted passage found in the New Testament Scriptures. Accordingly it claims at our hand due consideration and regard, that we may discover whether it has been legitimately appropriated and applied by the Baptists in carrying out their distinctive policy of unchurching the children.

It is to be observed, at the outset, that the authenticity of this passage and of the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel has been called in question. If you look into the Revised Version of the New Testament you will find that there is a space between the eighth and ninth verses of the chapter, and that there is a statement in the margin to the effect that the two oldest Greek manuscripts and some other authorities omit this ending of the Gospel, and that some other authorities have a different ending. It is generally agreed among scholars that the concluding verses of Mark beginning with the ninth verse are from a different hand, and, therefore, do not stand on the same level as the rest of the Gospel.

But, leaving aside the question of authenticity and taking the words under consideration as part of the Scripture text, let us see whether they can be interpreted into a pronouncement against infant Church-membership and Infant Baptism. The

passage cannot, without violence, be perverted to the purpose which it is made to serve in Baptist hands. The contention of our friends is that belief must, in every case, precede Baptism, and that infants are, therefore, excluded from the ordinance. Their argument might be stated in this form: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. But the infant cannot believe, therefore the infant is not to be baptized. But if this reasoning is correct it will carry us a little farther. For, keeping to the very same premises, and taking them in the same sense, we can draw another conclusion, and a conclusion that is a great deal more relevant to the principal premise than that which Baptist logic contrives to extract. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. But the infant cannot believe, therefore the infant shall not be saved. That is the goal, the inevitable goal to which this argument leads, and short of that goal there is no legitimate stopping-place, because it is salvation and not Baptism that is predicated in the principal premise, and therefore it should be salvation and not Baptism that is predicated in the conclusion. You cannot build on this passage an argument that will exclude infants from Baptism without, at the same time, building on it a stronger argument that will exclude infants from salvation.

But the Baptists are better than their logic. They admit that infants are saved. Dr. Carson admits that infants are saved, but not by the

Gospel, that is not by hearing the Gospel. But the results specified in this verse are results that follow from hearing the Gospel, and therefore infants are not concerned in the case. Dr. Carson simply puts infants outside the scope of this passage so far as salvation is concerned. Then they must be put outside the scope of the passage so far as Baptism is concerned, and we cannot allow them to be dragged in for the purpose of argument, and in order that some show of foundation for their exclusion from the ordinance of Baptism may be fabricated. Baptists admit the salvation of infants. They admit that the conclusion which denies the salvation of infants—the conclusion drawn from their own premises is a wrong conclusion. And you know that an argument which conducts to a wrong conclusion is an unsound argument. Thus you see that the argument based on this passage which denies Baptism to infants, is just the argument which denies salvation to infants, and cannot be made to serve the one purpose without at the same time serving the other purpose. It is to the credit of the Baptists that they refuse to treat their own argument seriously, refuse to follow it further than will serve their own immediate purpose, and allow that infants are received into Heaven, although they cannot be received into the Baptist Church. One is tempted in the direction of the inference that Heaven is somewhat less select than the Church of the Baptists. It is one

of the curious inconsistencies that sometimes show themselves in connection with the matter of human belief, that the Baptists, while admitting that infants have a place in the Church above, refuse to admit that they can have a place in the Church below.

The truth is, this passage has no reference whatever to infants. It must be taken in connection with the context in which it occurs. It is a statement following upon a Commission to the Apostles to preach the Gospel the wide world over. In the terms of this Commission the offer of salvation is to be made to all men everywhere. But all men will not treat that offer in the same way. Some will accept it. Others will reject it. By that acceptance or rejection they shall be judged. Those who receive the truth and submit to it shall be saved. Those who turn their back upon it and harden themselves against it shall be condemned. But the Gospel offer is not made to infants. It is made to those who are capable of receiving it, and to them it becomes the savour of life unto life or the savour of death unto death. Infants are not preached to. Infants cannot believe or disbelieve. Therefore this passage has nothing whatever to do with infants, and cannot legitimately be advanced either for Infant Baptism or against Infant Baptism. That question is not touched by this text, and must be determined independently of this verse.

The Baptists seem to interpret this passage in the sense that none but believers are to be baptized. In any other sense it would not serve them. I need hardly say that this is to put an unwarranted restriction upon the statement as it is given. To say that he who has a house is to have a vote does not imply that no one else is to have a vote. And to say that he who believes is to be baptized does not imply that no one else is to be baptized. But allowing the Baptists to have their way and taking it that believers, and believers only, are to be baptized, one would, in that case, have some little difficulty in distinguishing between those who are eligible for admission to the ordinance and those who are not. A candidate for Baptism presents himself to a Baptist minister by whom he is received with demonstrative delight. He is duly catechised and certified as a fit and proper subject for Baptism. But who is to certify that he is a believer and nothing but a believer? I have yet to learn that the gift of discerning spirits has been specially reserved for those in authority in the Baptist community, and is specially communicated to them. Of course I am in good hands, and one never knows what he may learn. But, in the meantime, I am strongly inclined to suspect that our Baptist friends fall somewhat short of infallibility in the matter of discriminating between believers and unbelievers, that in consequence they sometimes transgress

the limits which their own interpretation puts upon the passage, and that, occasionally, they immerse a brother who is not a believer and nothing but a believer. They cannot, in the face of the facts, deny that men sometimes profess to be what they are not, and that, at least once in a while, an unbeliever contrives to get immersed and subsequently proves by his life that he is not a believer. Was that Baptism valid or invalid? It would appear that, for the time, it is to be regarded as invalid. But if that immersed unbeliever should afterwards be reached by Divine grace, for Divine grace can reach even the most abandoned; if he should be brought under the regenerating influence of the Divine Spirit, and come to be savingly united to Christ, and give evidence of having passed from death unto life, and if, after having become a real believer, he should once more present himself for Baptism, he would not be immersed the second time notwithstanding the invalidity of his previous immersion. It would appear, then, that Baptism in infancy is permanently invalid, even if the infant should turn out to be a saint, but that Baptism in unbelief may be good and sufficient.

However, the point remains that Baptists cannot in practice restrict immersion to believers and believers only. They are obliged to admit that, like ourselves in such cases, they have to be satisfied with a credible profession of faith. In that case

they must not try to make so much capital out of the passage under consideration, because it does not read: "He that makes a credible profession of faith and is baptized shall be saved." And this leads me to say that this passage does not specify who are to be baptized, but who, within the sphere of its application, shall be saved, and therefore any attempt to make it serve any other purpose must be attended with failure. It does not refer to the visible Church, or to membership in the visible Church. It refers to the Church that is invisible, and, as far as it goes, to membership in the Church that is invisible. Thus we see that this passage, which has attained to something like classic dignity among Baptist controversialists, when quietly and carefully examined, cannot be compelled to give a particle of evidence in favour of excluding the infant children of Church members from Church-membership and Church recognition. It does not invade the rights of the children under the Abrahamic Covenant, and it does not interfere in the remotest way with the established practice of the Church of God for nearly two thousand years under the Old Economy in recognising the Church status of the infants of those who professed to be God's people.

CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN.

We have seen that neither of the recorded Commissions, neither the Discipling Commission nor

the Preaching Commission rules the children of Church members out of the Church. Did our Lord ever say anything on any other occasion that would guide His followers in relation to this question as to the Church standing of children? Can we put our finger on any recorded utterance of His that would indicate a desire for the exclusion of the little children from His Church? No, but we have utterances of a very different character that have been deemed of sufficient importance to be preserved in no less than three of the Gospels. And I do not think that the Saviour ever comes closer to us in all that human life of His than when He relieves Himself for a little by taking the little children into His human arms and pressing them close to His human heart. The tenderness of the Saviour never seemed to be so tender as when He touched a little child. He told His followers on one occasion that unless they became like little children they could not enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew xviii. 3; Mark x. 15; Luke xviii. 17). On another occasion He took a little child in His arms and said: "Whosoever shall receive one of such little children in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth not Me but Him that sent Me" (Mark ix. 36, 37; Matthew xviii. 5). Why, that is the very language the Saviour used in reference to the twelve disciples when He sent them forth for the first time on a mission of mercy to the lost sheep of the house of Israel: "He that

receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me" (Matthew x. 40). Thus the little children are not only assigned a place among His followers, but a place within the inner circle of His disciples. When we receive them in His name we receive the Saviour Himself. And surely that is just what we do when, in His name, we receive them into the fellowship of His Church.

But there is a passage given in each of the three first Evangelists, in which, as I take it, our Lord distinctly affirms the Church-membership of children: "Suffer the little children (or 'the babes,' as Luke describes them), and forbid them not to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark adds: "And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them" (Matthew xix. 14, 15; Mark x. 13, 16; Luke xviii. 15-17). "The Kingdom of Heaven" or "the Kingdom of God" cannot be taken to mean less than the Kingdom of God in its visible manifestation, or, as we should say, the visible Church. If it mean more than that then the greater includes the less. And "of such" cannot be taken to refer to full-grown people who are childlike in disposition and spirit. Imagine the Saviour saying: "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto Me, for full-grown people who have childlike qualities belong to the Kingdom of Heaven." Such an interpretation seems, to me at least, to be out of keeping

with the directness and simplicity and naturalness of the Saviour's utterances, and to rob this delightful incident of all its beauty and most of its significance. When the mothers brought their little children to the Saviour that He might lay His hands on them and bless them, prompted thereto by the unerring mother instinct which assured them, in advance, that their quest would not be in vain, they did not seek this favour on the ground of any consideration outside the children themselves. It was for the children's own sake that they found their way to the place where Jesus was and besought Him for His benediction and His touch, and it was for the children's own sake that the Saviour responded to the Divinely-directed desire of these mothers with such prodigality of sympathy. The Saviour wants parents to follow the example of these mothers and to bring their infant children to the place where He is in the midst of His disciples that He may receive them and bless them and recognise them by a visible sign as having a place in His visible Kingdom. It may be said that our Lord did not baptize the little children that were brought to Him. It was not necessary that He should. Christian Baptism was not then instituted. But He declared that they were in the membership of the Church, and membership in His Church carries with it the right of recognition in the recognition rite.

Jesus loved the little children, and received them and blessed them when they were brought to Him in the days of His public ministry, and after His death and resurrection He continued to have them in His heart, and when, as we learn from John xxi. 15, He was giving directions to Peter, whom He then restored to his position as the leading Apostle, He charged him to prove his devotion by feeding, in the first instance, the lambs of the flock. The first care of the Risen Saviour was for His lambs. So that, first and last and all through, the Saviour's love for the little children was one of the great outstanding features of His ministry and His life.

These lovely pictures of Jesus and the little children would never fade away from the recollection of His disciples, as we may gather from the frequency with which they are referred to in the Gospel narrative. And if it had come to be a question with them of driving the little children out of the Church and depriving them of the Church-standing which they had enjoyed in the past, or of allowing them to remain where the Abrahamic Covenant placed them and to retain the rights which the Abrahamic Covenant secured to them—if such a question had arisen we can understand that, in the absence of a plain and positive and pointed precept of exclusion, and in view of the relations which Christ sustained to the children throughout the whole course of His ministry, and

in view of the unrepealed law and the undisturbed practice of the past—we can understand that, in such a case, the little children were not likely to be any worse off than they were before, and that whatever enlargement of favour the new order of things might bring them there would not, at least, be any restriction of privilege in the matter of Church-standing.

THE CONTINUITY OF THE CHURCH.

We have now travelled to the starting point of the New Dispensation, and we have failed to find in the Gospels any indication of that exclusiveness, in relation to Church-membership, that would rob the little children of their birthright. Before we move any farther it will be in order to observe that the Church under the New Dispensation is in all essential particulars the same as the Church under the Old Dispensation. I know that the Baptists deny the existence of an Old Testament Church, although we read of "the Church in the wilderness" (Acts vii. 38). Some of them go so far as to deny that Judaism was a religion in any sense. In their anxiety to deliver themselves from the force of the argument from Circumcision they do not hesitate to secularize all the arrangements and observances and ceremonies of the Old Economy. They try to make it appear that Jewish life was dominated and determined by political considerations and political influences, and that there was no great institution or

organization to remind the people of their relation to God and of their obligation to do His will. But in that case what are we to make of the prophets and psalmists and leaders who influenced the nation in the direction of righteousness? What are we to make of the Temple and its worship? What are we to make of the synagogues and their services? What are we to make of the Old Testament Scriptures themselves? Is everything pertaining to Judaism to be secularized in order to meet the exigencies of the Baptist situation? The truth is the Jews were pre-eminently religious. That was their great outstanding characteristic. And true religion was the same in their day as it is in ours. The experience of God's people was the same under both Dispensations, and that is why we can still use the Psalms to edification in our service of praise. In connection with the parable of the wicked husbandmen our Saviour said to the Jews: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew xxi. 43). The Kingdom changes hands, but it is the same Kingdom all the while. It is the same olive tree that grew up in the past, into which the Gentile branches have been grafted that they might be partakers of its root and fatness (Romans xi. 17). It is not a new olive tree that is spoken of, but the old olive tree that lived through the Old Dispensation rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant. And the Jewish branches

that have been cut off shall yet be grafted into their own olive tree, for God is able to graft them in again. It is the same household of God, into which Gentile strangers and sojourners have been introduced (Ephesians ii. 19). The Church of God continues the same all through. It was a very easy transition for the Jews who accepted the Christian faith on the day of Pentecost. Faith in a Messiah to come became changed into faith in a Messiah already come. In some cases the Jews who submitted to the new teaching simply formed themselves into a new synagogue and had their court of elders as before, thus constituting themselves, at one and the same time, a Christian synagogue and a Presbyterian congregation. So easy and natural was the transition from the old order to the new. This fact of the continuity and identity of the Church in all ages has an important bearing on the subject of Baptism; for it is obvious that if the Church continued to be the same all through then its constitution must have been the same, and it must continue under the New Dispensation, as it did under the Old, to consist of those who profess the true religion and their children.

LECTURE VIII.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We have seen that, under the Old Testament Economy, infants were, by Divine appointment, recognised as members of the visible Church, and received the sign and seal of the Covenant on which the Church was based. We have seen that our Lord not only did not set aside this Divine arrangement which had been in existence nearly two thousand years before He came, but that He, in the most positive and significant fashion, put upon it the stamp of His approval, and confirmed it in perpetuity. We have seen that, in all essential particulars, the New Testament Church is the same as the Old Testament Church, and is, therefore, constituted in the same way, consisting, in its visible form, of all those who profess the true religion and their children. And inasmuch as Baptism is admittedly the ordinance in which membership in the visible Church is visibly recognised, we are compelled to the conclusion that the infant children of Church members ought to be baptized. The question of Baptism is determined by the question of Church-membership, and the

question of Church-membership is decided in favour of the infants concerned. We do not need to find in the New Testament a special positive Divine enactment authorizing the Baptism of infants. We do not need to find in the New Testament a special positive Divine enactment constituting the infant children of professing believers members of the visible Church, although, as we have seen, the words of our Lord in this connection are explicit and conclusive. We find in the Old Testament a special positive Divine enactment constituting the infant children of professing believers members of the visible Church, and that enactment must stand until it is repealed or set aside, not by Baptist assumption or Baptist assertion, but by Divine authority. We are not prepared to treat the Old Testament as a dead letter. We are not prepared to repudiate, for a purpose, any part of the Word of God. We are not prepared to give way to the exclusive mania that not only excludes pouring and sprinkling as lawful modes of Baptism, that not only excludes infants from membership and status in the Church, but which also excludes the evidence—the relevant evidence which the Old Testament offers in this case, and without which the case cannot be rightly issued. The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is our rule of faith and practice, and the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, must be allowed to decide this question as

to the Subjects of Baptism, and every other question that concerns the doctrine, government, and worship of the Church.

BAPTISM AND CIRCUMCISION.

It is to be noted that, while the Church has preserved its identity all through, certain changes in the direction of freedom and enlargement came into force at the inception of the New Dispensation. When a minor comes to be of full age he is freed from the restrictions peculiar to minority, and enters upon the inheritance that awaits him, with liberty of possession, enjoyment and use, but his identity continues. And so, when the Church of God ceased to be in a state of minority, it was relieved of many of the restrictions of the past, and succeeded to the full inheritance of privilege and blessing that awaited it in the Divine purpose, but it continued to be the same Church all the time. As we have already indicated, the recognition rite of Circumcision was displaced by the recognition rite of Baptism. This is evident from the terms of the Commission (Matthew xxviii. 19), in which Baptism is enjoined in connection with the making of disciples. Under the Old Dispensation disciples or proselytes were circumcised. Under the New Dispensation they are baptized. It took the early Christians some time to realize that Circumcision had been set aside by Baptism, but the question was authoritatively decided, as we

learn from Acts xv., by the Council of Jerusalem. For reasons of expediency, however, Circumcision was allowed to continue for a time side by side with Baptism in the Jewish section of the New Testament Church, just as in that section of the Church the observance of the seventh day as Sabbath was allowed to continue for a time side by side with the keeping of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day.

Further evidence as to the substitution of Baptism for Circumcision is to be found in the fact that both rites had the same spiritual significance. Each of them was a symbol of purification. In Colossians ii. 11, 12, Circumcision and Baptism in the higher and spiritual sense are actually identified. Spiritual Circumcision and spiritual Baptism are one and the same. The Circumcision of Christ is the Baptism that unites us to Christ. The evidence of this passage is conclusive on the point. But that is not all. We can show that Baptism is directly related to the Abrahamic Covenant and the Abrahamic promise. In the course of his address on the day of Pentecost Peter called upon his hearers to repent and be baptized. Why? "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him" (Acts ii. 38, 39). We have already proved that "the promise" referred to in this passage is the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant. So that on this first occasion on which

the ordinance of Christian Baptism was administered it was connected with the Abrahamic Covenant and used as a seal of the Abrahamic promise. It is abundantly clear that Baptism has come in the room of Circumcision. As was to be expected the new rite is in keeping with the character of the New Dispensation. Unlike Circumcision, it is not restricted in its administration to a particular day and to one sex, just as the Lord's Supper is not restricted, in its observance, to a particular time and to one sex. In both cases the change is in the direction of a more advanced state, a more enlightened age, and a more progressive spirit.

I know that our Baptist friends take exception to the statement that Baptism has come in the place of Circumcision. They hold that literal Circumcision has been replaced by the Circumcision made without hands. At least that is the view of the Rev. F. B. Meyer.[1] But that contention cannot be sustained, because the Circumcision made without hands is not peculiar to the New Dispensation. It existed, in many cases, side by side with literal Circumcision under the Old Dispensation. Then, as now, the sign and the thing signified were, if not always, at least sometimes united in the same person. As we saw in a previous lecture, the Circumcision of the heart is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy x. 16, xxx. 6; Jeremiah iv. 4). The inward and the outward.

[1] *Seven Reasons for Believer's Baptism*, p. 16.

Circumcision co-existed, if not always in the same person, at least under the same Dispensation, just as the inward and the outward Baptism co-exist, if not always in the same person, at least under the same Dispensation. The inward and spiritual grace did not take the place of the outward and visible sign. Under the New Dispensation the grace continued to have its own place, only that it became fuller and deeper and more general and more dominant, but the corresponding sign was changed that it might the better correspond with the spiritual enlargement of which it was to be the symbol. The grace did not take the place of the sign under the New Dispensation any more than it did under the Old Dispensation. The new grace took the place of the grace that was less copious, and the new sign took the place of the sign that was less comprehensive. In other words, Baptism took the place of Circumcision. It is quite evident that if the place of Circumcision was to be taken by something else, it must have been taken by Baptism, for there was nothing else available and appropriate for the purpose.

A FALSE ANALOGY.

The Baptists sometimes try to score a point here on the ground of analogy. They point out that as natural birth preceded Circumcision, so spiritual birth should precede Baptism; that as the Jews were born into the privileges they enjoyed

under the Old Dispensation, so Christians are born again into the privileges they enjoy under the New Dispensation; that as in the olden days men were born into the commonwealth of Israel, so in these days men are born again into the Church of God. But the analogy is fallacious and false. It puts spiritual birth and water Baptism on the same plane, which is obviously inadmissible. It confounds two things that differ, viz., the Church visible and the Church invisible. It is true that the Jew was born in the visible Church, and that his Church status was recognised in the rite of Circumcision. But it is not true that he was born into the invisible Church. To that end a higher birth and a higher Circumcision were necessary. And it is true that men are born again into the invisible Church, but it is not always true that men are born again before they enter the visible Church, even when that Church bears the Baptist name. You cannot secure that regeneration shall precede water Baptism. The analogy to be correct should be put in this form: As natural birth preceded Circumcision, so spiritual birth should precede spiritual Baptism or the Baptism of the Spirit. Of course it does not, in that form, avail anything against our position, as it leaves water Baptism out of account altogether. Our view is that the children of God's professing people are born in the visible Church now, and so are entitled to the recognition rite of Baptism, just as the

children of God's professing people were born in the visible Church under the Old Economy, and so were entitled to the recognition rite of Circumcision, and that the true people of God enter the invisible Church now, through the birth and baptism of the Spirit, just as the true people of God entered the invisible Church in the olden time through the birth and Circumcison of the Spirit. In the face of that position the Baptist analogy, so-called, is absolutely destitute of point and pertinence.

CHILDREN CONTINUE IN THE CHURCH.

So far we have found nothing to countenance the idea that the infants of Church members should be denied Church status and Church recognition, and we have found nothing that can be legitimately construed into a repeal of the law by which the infants of professing believers are in the membership of the visible Church, and have a right to the ordinance in which such membership is visibly recognised. We continue to prosecute our inquiry into the teaching of the Word of God in reference to this matter that we may discover whether there is anything in Apostolic teaching or Apostolic practice that would modify the position which has been, so far, established by Scripture.

Let us go away back in thought to the day of Pentecost and imagine ourselves among the crowd

of men that listened to Peter, and who heard him say: "To you is the promise and to your children." What meaning would these words convey to an audience of Jews who were accustomed to regard their children as embraced within the Covenant and as sharing in the Covenant promise? There is only one meaning that was possible to them in the circumstances, and that is that their children were bound up with themselves in the Covenant and in the privileges which the Covenant secured. Any other interpretation would have been quite out of line with Jewish thought, and would, in fact, have been unintelligible. "To thee and to thy seed" had one meaning, and only one throughout the whole history of the Jewish people, and that meaning was not set aside on the day of Pentecost, or for that matter on any other day. It has been suggested that the word "children" is to be understood here in the sense of "descendants." But even the sense "descendants" will not serve the purpose of our Baptist friends unless it be understood again in another sense, and in such a sense as to exclude infant descendants. In view of the historical situation it is impossible to construe the words of the Apostle in such a way as to leave the children of professedly believing parents outside the range of the Covenant promise and outside the pale of the visible Church. If the Apostles had been Baptists, and if they had told

the hundreds and thousands of Jewish parents who accepted the Christian faith and entered the New Testament Church that, by a new arrangement, their little children could not participate in the status to which they had been raised, and could not be recognised as having a place in the society into which they had been received, I think it is certain that, at least some of these parents, with their Old Testament ideas about the children, would not have silently acquiesced in this new and revolutionary departure, which we are to suppose was an improvement on everything that had preceded it, and that some of them would have ventured to ask for a word of explanation. The fact that, so far as the record shows—and a matter of such outstanding importance would not have been overlooked—no such explanation was ever asked for or given is sufficient to prove that there was no occasion for it, and that no change adverse to the rights and interests of the children, such as the Baptists contend for, was ever suggested or contemplated in connection with the work of discipling the nations as it was done in the Apostolic age.

BAPTISM AND A PROFESSION OF FAITH.

But then we are told that a profession of faith was made in connection with most, if not all, of the baptisms to which reference is made in the New Testament. Even so, we cannot allow the

Baptists to take possession of these cases and appropriate them to their own use, as if they alone had any interest in them. We cannot admit that these cases stand out in opposition to our principles and our practice, and in support of Baptist principles and Baptist practice. There is not one of them that does not belong to us quite as much as to the Baptists. Even if all the baptisms referred to in the New Testament followed upon a personal profession of faith that circumstance would not, in the very least, make for the Baptist contention as opposed to the view which we hold, because we baptize professing believers as well as they. There is not a solitary case of Baptism in the New Testament that is inconsistent with our practice, and there is not a solitary case of Baptism in the New Testament that our Church would not have performed. Our missionaries to the Jews and the heathen act precisely as the Apostles acted. They baptize those who make a profession of faith, and, in their reports, they give most prominence to these adult baptisms. Of course they speak of the Baptism of children, but when they visit a district for the first time, and make some headway in the work of discipling, their first baptisms must, in the nature of the case, be baptisms of professing believers, and would be so described in an account of what they were enabled to do in that particular place. And it is to be remembered that the Book of Acts gives us an account of

the beginnings of the Gospel at a great many different centres. The narrative moves quickly from place to place. It does not settle down to describe continuously and exhaustively what happened in the course of five or ten years in connection with a particular congregation. It is not to be wondered at that, in these circumstances, the New Testament record, in so far as it touches on Baptism, deals mainly with the Baptism of those who had come to years of discretion and were capable of making a personal profession of faith. We should not think it strange even if infants were altogether left out of account in the passing references that have been preserved in the scanty record of the Apostolic age. Of course, the very silence of the record in regard to infants is so far favourable to their continuance in the Church, for if they had not continued to be in the Church the silence would have been broken.

HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS.

But there is at least some significance in the fact that Family baptisms were of frequent occurrence. There are twelve separate instances of Baptism given in the New Testament. In four of these cases the reference is to numbers of people, at Jerusalem (Acts ii. 41), in Samaria (Acts viii. 12), at Corinth (Acts xviii. 8), and at Ephesus (Acts xix. 5). In three cases the reference is to individuals, the Ethiopian nobleman (Acts viii.

38), Paul (Acts ix. 18), and Gaius (1 Corinthians i. 14). Of the remaining five cases three at least were cases of Family Baptism, viz., those of Lydia and her household (Acts xvi. 15), of the jailer at Philippi and all his (Acts xvi. 33), and of the household of Stephanas (1 Corinthians i. 16). From the language that is used in describing the other two cases, viz., those of Cornelius (Acts x. 48, xi. 14-16) and Crispus (Acts xviii. 8 ; 1 Corinthians i. 14), it is more than likely that in each of these cases also the household was baptized. Thus it would appear that in almost every case, if not in every case, in which a household is mentioned, the whole household, as such, was baptized. It may be noted that in two of the undoubted cases of Household Baptism, viz., those of Lydia and the jailer, it is not in evidence that any one except the head of the household believed. Lydia's heart was "opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul," but the record is silent regarding the other members of the household. The jailer "rejoiced greatly with all his house, (he) having believed in God." The Greek participle (having believed) is singular, and refers only to the jailer. Now I do not say that there was an infant in any one of these households. There may or may not have been. But it is somewhat significant, to say the least of it, that such a large proportion of the baptisms mentioned are Family baptisms. It shows us that Family Baptism was

quite a common thing in the Apostolic Church. Because it is evident that the instances given are only samples of what was taking place over the length and breadth of the field covered by the missionary labours of the Apostles and their helpers. It shows us, moreover—and this is the important thing—that the Old Testament practice of receiving whole households at a time into the visible Church was continued in the Apostolic age, and that the Old Testament principle of the solidarity of the family was recognised and applied, with Apostolic sanction and authority, in the execution of our Lord's great Discipling Commission.

It may be said that if the Old Testament practice of receiving whole households into the visible Church is to be continued under the Gospel Dispensation, then servants and slaves should be baptized as well as the children. Certainly, if they make a profession of faith as was done in every case of the kind in Old Testament times, and as they might naturally be expected to do. Why not baptize them if they submit to the faith after the manner of those whom they serve, and if they continue to be in the household, and so constitute a part of the Church in the house? The fact is, Household Baptism was of frequent occurrence in the Apostolic age, and it is not of frequent occurrence in the Baptist communion. Because it does not often happen that all the

members of a household are of age to make a personal profession of faith, and, even, where that does happen, it is not often that all the members of such a household come under the influence of the truth at the same time, and are constrained to make a profession of faith at the same time, and so are eligible for Baptism at the same time. In the very nature of the case the Baptism of a whole household at the same time in connection with a Baptist mission must be a very unusual thing, so unusual as to indicate a glaring discrepancy between the practice of the Baptists and that of the Apostles.

NO DISTINCTIVELY BAPTIST BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Baptists try to make what capital they can out of the fact that there is no specific reference in the New Testament to the Baptism of an infant. That seems, at first sight, to be a very formidable circumstance and a circumstance that is calculated to bring discredit and confusion upon all those who do not accept the Baptist gospel of exclusion. But it so happens that the Baptists themselves have to reckon with a circumstance that is still more formidable and still more confusing. The difficulty the Baptists have to face is this: that there is not only no specific reference in the New Testament, but no reference of any kind, explicit or implicit, to the Baptism of any one who

was a professing believer in the sense that is distinctively Baptist. No doubt we have references to the Baptism of professing believers, but these are all professing believers that other Christian Churches would baptize as well as the Baptist Church. We cannot allow the Baptists to appropriate common property. We cannot allow them to take credit for New Testament baptisms that do not exemplify their distinctive principles as opposed to the distinctive principles of other Churches. These New Testament baptisms are not exclusively Baptist baptisms. In fact, the Baptists have less claim upon them than other Churches, because of the number of household baptisms that are mentioned. But let us take it that these New Testament baptisms belong equally to all the Churches that baptize into the name of the Trinity. Then the boasted advantage of the Baptist as arising from these New Testament references disappears, and he is no better off than his neighbours.

Now, this fact once grasped, it will be seen that the Baptist has to deal with the difficulty that he is left without a solitary reference that supports his own peculiar view as opposed to the views of those who differ from him. He cannot put his finger on the case of a single person who, as an infant, was left unbaptized when his parents accepted the Christian faith and received Christian Baptism, and who, having come to years of discretion, was baptized on his own profession. There

is no such case mentioned in the New Testament. And if the Baptist view is correct there must have been thousands of such cases during the sixty years or more covered by the record of the Apostolic age. But such a thing is never so much as hinted at, and therefore the distinctively Baptist principle is left without the support of a single New Testament reference.

With the principles and practice of the Old Testament Church to our credit, and with the words of our Lord regarding the little children to our credit, and with the perpetuity of the Abrahamic Covenant to our credit, and with the identity of the Church in all ages to our credit, we can afford to do without a specific reference to a case of Infant Baptism in the New Testament, and even to forego the credit that might reasonably accrue from the numerous Household baptisms to which reference is made. But the Baptist, without a solitary New Testament reference to give countenance to his peculiar view, and without a past in which he can find his distinctive principle in operation, and without a sentence in the whole Word of God on which he can found an inference favourable to his favourite tenet, is in a somewhat worse case. It would show a saner and more exact appreciation of the situation if our Baptist friends would not attempt to claim so much credit for themselves for references and examples that are not their exclusive property, and if they would not attempt to heap

discredit on other people who cannot point to an example of Infant Baptism when they cannot themselves point to a single example of so-called "Believers' Baptism" that supports their own distinctive view.

LECTURE IX.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*continued.*

We have now travelled over nearly the whole of the sacred record in so far as it bears on the question as to the Subjects of Baptism. We have carefully considered every point that is claimed to favour the Baptist view of this question. We have allowed every Baptist argument that can be advanced to have the full weight it registers when tested in the balance of the sanctuary. And the result is that we have failed to discover, in the Word of God, so much as a single trace of support for the distinctive position of the Baptists in relation to this matter. Neither in the teaching of our Lord Himself, nor in the teaching of the inspired expositors of His will, have we found anything that can even be tortured into a pretext for excluding the infant children of Church members from the fellowship of the Church. On the other hand, we have met with many statements of our Lord and His Apostles which affirm or imply that the status of the children has not been reduced, and that the privileges of the children have not been restricted, under the broader and more comprehensive regime that Christianity has

inaugurated. Our position in reference to this question has been vindicated up to the point of demonstration by the testimony of God's Word, and we might, at this stage, take leave of this aspect of the subject, with convictions firmly rooted in the groundwork of the truth, and perfectly proof against the fallacies and superficialities of specious error. However, there are still a few Scripture passages that must be considered as bearing upon the question in hand, and to these we shall briefly refer.

HOLY CHILDREN.

The first of these is 1 Corinthians vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." The Apostle was replying to a question which had been put to him regarding marriages in which one partner was a believer and the other an unbeliever. He had been asked to declare whether, in such a case, the union should continue, and whether the believer could, consistently with the principles of Christianity, remain in the married relation with the unbeliever. The union of a Jew with a heathen, while sometimes tolerated, especially in the cities of the Dispersion, was always regarded with disfavour, and was, in fact, a direct violation of one of the Old Testament precepts. After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity such mixed marriages came to

be quite common, and Ezra gave orders that they should be dissolved, for "the seed of holiness" must not mingle with the unholy. And it may have occurred to some Christians of the Jewish section of the Church at Corinth that possibly the marriage law of the Old Economy was still in force, and that the union of a Christian and a non-Christian was thus prohibited. At any rate the question had been raised and the matter was submitted to Paul for his decision.

The Apostle decides that the issue rests with the unbeliever. Where the unbeliever desires to separate, let there be separation, but where the unbeliever consents to remain the union is to continue. The reason for this decision in favour of the continuance of the married relation, with the consent of the unbelieving party, is given in the passage under consideration. You will see that it applies equally to the case in which the unbeliever is the husband and to the case in which the unbeliever is the wife. For the sake of clearness, let us take the case in which the wife is the believer. Then "the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." That is to say, there is no defilement in such a union. The Christian partner is not defiled. The non-Christian partner is sanctified. The believing wife is not dragged down toward the level of the unbelieving husband. The unbelieving husband is

lifted up somewhat toward the level of the believing wife. Her status does not suffer while his status is improved. It is the unbelief and not the belief that is overborne. The family as a whole takes its character from the believing parent. Her sanctity imparts a kind of sanctity to all who are bound up with her in family relationship. The piety of the wife is the predominating element in the family life, and thus the order of nature has been modified by the operation of grace, and, from the Christian standpoint, the wife, and not the husband, is the head of the household, and the children are reckoned to the believing mother and not to the unbelieving father, and so are holy. If this were not so—if the married state were not elevated and purified by the piety of the believing wife, and if the husband were not, in some sense, sanctified through her faith, then the children should be unclean; but they are not unclean; they are holy; and therefore the sanctification of the husband and the purification of the marriage bond have been effected.

You will, of course, understand that the word "holy" is used in Scripture in two different senses. It is used to describe purity of moral character, as when we speak of the holiness of God, or of the comparative holiness of a saintly man. But it is also used to describe what has been consecrated to God. Anything that was separated from a common use and devoted to the service of God was said to

be holy. In this sense the Sabbath was holy; that is to say, it was separated from other days and set apart for the service of God. In this sense the vessels of the Temple, the Temple itself, and even the land in which the Israelites lived were said to be holy. In this sense also the Jewish people were said to be holy. They had been separated from other people and called into the service of God. And the children of Jewish parents were considered holy. They were included with their parents in the Covenant, and so were consecrated to God, who had pledged Himself in the Covenant to be their God, and who claimed them as His, and insisted that they should receive the sign and seal of His Covenant. And it is said that the children of half-Jewish marriages were treated as Jews, on the principle that the good is stronger than the evil. The case of Timothy will at once suggest itself. His mother was a Jewess and his father was a Gentile, and so the rite of Circumcision should have been administered at the proper time. For the sake of expediency, the omission was afterwards made good by direction of Paul. Now, when it is said that the children of Jewish parents were holy, it is not meant that they were free from sin, but simply that they were consecrated to God. And so in the case under consideration, when it is said that the children of believing parents and the children of one believing parent are holy, we are not to understand that they are

holy in the sense of being free from sin, but simply in the sense of being consecrated to God. The Apostle takes over the language of the Old Economy, and uses it to describe the status of the children under the Gospel Dispensation, which he would not have done if the children had not continued to enjoy the status they had in the Old Testament Church. The children of God's professing people were holy in the olden time under the Abrahamic Covenant, and we learn from the language of the Apostle, in this passage, that the children of God's professing people are still holy under the same Covenant.

Whatever else may be doubtful in the interpretation of this verse one thing is certain, and that is that the children of believing parents or of one believing parent are holy in the sense already explained. That is the admitted fact on which the argument is based. Anything that leads to the contradiction of that fundamental truth is untrue. Thus, if the unbelieving husband is not sanctified in the believing wife, then the children are unclean—outside the Covenant and on the same level with the children of the heathen. But they are not unclean; they are holy; therefore the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the believing wife. That is the Apostle's argument fully stated in logical form. Or we might put it in this way. If belief does not prevail against unbelief so as to give character to the whole

family, then the children cannot be reckoned to belief, and are unclean. But they are holy; therefore belief dominates and gives character to the family, and there is a sense in which it is a sanctified family, and, therefore, a sense in which the unbelieving husband is sanctified.

It is to be observed that there is a distinction between the holiness of the children and the sanctification of the husband. The word in the original translated "holy" is a great deal stronger and more positive in its significance than the word translated "is sanctified." The children are holy under the Covenant through their relation to their believing mother. The husband is sanctified, apart from the Covenant, through his relation to his believing wife. It is practically certain that the young children, under the Christian training of the mother, will come to accept for themselves the profession which she has made on their behalf; but while it is possible that the husband may come to accept the faith, it is not by any means certain that he shall attain to that position. But he is sanctified, so far, through his consent to live with his believing wife, and to allow her to mould the life of the children, that he has, to an extent, become separated from heathen influences, and, to an extent, yielded to the influence of Christianity, although that influence has not operated with sufficient effectiveness to carry him forward from the region of unbelief into

the region of faith. He is not a member of the Church, and yet he is not in the same position in relation to the Church as the heathen. While he stands outside the circle of Church-membership, his relation to his believing wife forms a kind of connecting link between him and the Church. In a criticism of the "Ministry and Methods of Church Work," from the pen of Noah Davis, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, the writer says :—

"As a rule, I only hear the sermons of a single minister—Dr. John Hall—of whose church (by reason of my wife's membership) I am a brother-in-law."[1]

Now, while I do not mean for a moment to compare the distinguished writer of the article referred to with the unbelieving husband of a believing wife, still I think the striking form of expression he uses to describe his relation to a particular Church sheds some light on the relation which the unbelieving husband sustained to the Church through his union with a believing wife.

Commentators are not quite agreed as to whether there is a reference to Infant Baptism in this passage. A few of the German critics of a past generation, by a curious process of reasoning, arrived at the conclusion that the passage is opposed to the practice of Infant Baptism, but this conclusion has not been accepted by the ablest

[1] *Homiletic Monthly*, March 1884, p. 353.

and most recent expositors. Beet shows conclusively that the verse cannot be accepted as proof or presumption that Infant Baptism was not practised at the time.[1] Principal Edwards says that if we accept the obsignatory theory of Baptism (that is that Baptism is a sign and seal of the Covenant) the principle on which Infant Baptism rests is contained in this verse.[2] Dr. Godet, who is, perhaps, the foremost living expositor, says he does not find Paul's expressions intelligible, except on the supposition that the practice of Infant Baptism existed.[3] We are obviously warranted in accepting the position of Principal Edwards, and in taking it that the principle of Infant Baptism is involved in the holiness of the children. As they are in the Covenant and have their holiness under the Covenant, there is no reason why the sign and seal of the Covenant should be withheld.

But Baptists say, "If you baptize the children which are holy, why not baptize the unbelieving husband who is sanctified?" For two reasons; because, in the first place, his sanctification is, as we have seen, different from the holiness of the children, and, in the second place, because he, as an adult, cannot be baptized apart from a profession of faith.

When Baptists come to interpret the term

[1] *Commentary on the Epistles to the Corinthians*, p. 118.
[2] *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 173.
[3] *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 346.

"holy," as applied in this passage to the children, they find themselves in a difficulty. They contend, for the most part, that the word is to be understood in the sense of *legitimate*. But there are at least two fatal objections to this view. First: The word translated "holy" never has the meaning *legitimate*. Dr. Wilson tells us that it occurs over five hundred times in the Septuagint and Apocrypha, and about two hundred and forty times in the Greek Testament, but in not one of these instances does it mean *legitimate*.[1] Second: This interpretation would make all heathen marriages illegitimate, a view which is manifestly untenable. So that while the Baptists may try to formulate objections to our interpretation of this passage—objections which are easily disposed of—they cannot put forward an interpretation of their own that will bear to be looked at in the light of scholarship and common sense. One thing this passage makes perfectly clear whatever interpretation may be adopted, and that is that there is a distinction between the children of parents who are in the membership of the Church and those of parents who are outside the Church. This distinction is not generally or adequately recognised by the Baptist denomination.

[1] *Infant Baptism*, p. 513.

APOSTOLIC RECOGNITION OF THE CHURCH STANDING OF CHILDREN.

We notice in the next place two New Testament references from which the Church-membership of young children in the Apostolic age is a necessary inference. The Epistle to the Ephesians is addressed "to the saints which are at Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians i. 1), and in Ephesians vi. 1, we read: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Therefore, young children were in the membership of the Church at Ephesus. Similarly the Epistle to the Colossians is addressed to "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse" (Colossians i. 2), and in Colossians iii. 20, we read: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord." So that there were young children in the membership of the Church at Colosse also. It is evident that there were young children in all the Churches of the Apostolic age, and if they were in the membership of the Church their membership must have been recognised in the ordinance of Baptism. This fact has so impressed itself on the minds of the Baptists that I believe they are now in the habit of baptizing not only adults, but even young children who make a profession of faith. In some cases they are willing to baptize children as young as nine years of age. Thus far they have been driven

toward our position by the undeniable influence of the truth.

INFANT DEDICATION.

Nor is this all. It has been borne in upon some of the leading Baptists (Revs. Dr. John Clifford and F. B. Meyer, for example) that there is something after all in the statement of the Apostle that the children of believing parents or of one believing parent are "holy," and that there is something after all in the words which our Lord used regarding the little children, and that there ought to be some way by which the Church should recognise the infant children of its members. Thus there has come to be in some Baptist Churches what is called a Dedication Service for infants. I have a Form of Service which has been prepared for use on such occasions, and it differs from a baptismal service only in this that no water is used, and that the baptismal formula is not pronounced. The parents publicly dedicate their child to God, and publicly undertake to train him in the knowledge and fear of God. That is another step in the direction of the Scriptural position for which we contend, the position which the Church is bound to take up in relation to the children of its members, and, in this connection, the position which we are convinced no Church can refuse to take without serious injury to its highest interests.

We have now traversed the whole of the Scrip-

ture ground that can be regarded as having any bearing on the question as to the Subjects of Baptism, and we have not only failed to find any support for the Baptist view that infants should be excluded from the ordinance, but we have found that ever since the Church began to exist in a continuous visible form, the infant children of Church members were included in its membership and were entitled to the ordinance in which membership was recognised. That is our reading of the Word of God. That, as we take it, is the mind of the Spirit in reference to this matter. That is the decision of the Judge whose ruling for us is final, because we cannot allow that there is any appeal from the deliverance of "the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

THE TESTIMONY OF THE EARLY FATHERS.

It has been contended that the history of the Church in the post-Apostolic age is opposed to the practice of Infant Baptism, but this contention, like so many of the other contentions we have had occasion to notice in the course of this investigation, is absolutely destitute of foundation. We give a few quotations from some of the early Fathers which will serve to illustrate and substantiate this statement. Justin Martyr, who was born about A.D. 100, and who was, therefore, a contemporary of Polycarp, who was a disciple and friend of the Apostle John, says:—

"With us are many, both men and women, sixty and seventy years of age, who were discipled to Christ from childhood and do continue uncorrupted, and I boast that I could produce such from every race of men."[1]

There is obviously a reference here to the words of our Lord's Commission, "Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them." Taking it that Justin's First Apology, from which this quotation is given, was written A.D. 150—and it may have been written as early as A.D. 140 (some say it was written about A.D. 138)—the aged Christians of whom he speaks must have been discipled to Christ by Baptism in infancy in the Apostolic age. It is worthy of note that Justin Martyr in common with all the early Christian writers speaks of Baptism as regeneration. Thus he says:—

"Then we bring them to some place where there is water and they are regenerated (baptized) by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated."[2]

Irenaus, born about A.D. 120 or 125, says:—

"For He (Christ) came to save all persons by Himself; all, I mean, who by Him are regenerated (baptized) unto God; infants and little ones, and children and youths, and older persons."[3]

The next writer we come to is Tertullian, who was born about A.D. 160. He says:—

"Therefore according to every one's condition and disposition, and also his age, the delaying of Baptism is more profitable, especially in the case of little children."[4]

[1] *Apol. I.* c. 15. [2] *Apol. I.* c. 61.
[3] *Contra Haereses*, Lib. II. c. 22, s. 4.
[4] *De Baptismo*, c. 18.

The date of the work from which this quotation is taken is about A.D. 200. Tertullian is usually cited by Baptist writers as opposing Infant Baptism. But he did not oppose it in the case of infants who were sickly and not likely to live. And he did not oppose it in other cases on the ground that it was unscriptural, but only on the ground that it was inexpedient. And why inexpedient? Because he held that Baptism was accompanied by the remission of all past sins and that sins committed after Baptism were peculiarly dangerous. Therefore he maintained that Baptism should be delayed as long as possible, not only in the case of infants, but also in the case of grown-up people who were supposed to be in circumstances of special temptation. His idea was that the longer Baptism is delayed the better, provided it be administered before the close of life. This idea seems to have commended itself to a considerable number of Christians for more than a century after his time. The Emperor Constantine the Great, although a professing Christian for many years before, was not baptized till after the commencement of his last illness. Tertullian does not speak of Infant Baptism as an innovation, and if he could have branded it as an innovation he would doubtless have done so, for no argument would have carried greater weight, or would have proved more effective at the time. His way of speaking about Infant Baptism is sufficient to show that it was the

common practice of the Church in his day. And he does not oppose it on Baptist grounds. Therefore, his testimony does not in the very least serve the Baptist cause. And he is the only Christian writer in the early centuries who has a word to say against Infant Baptism. He made his protest in the interest of his peculiar theory of Baptismal Regeneration, but, as Dr Schaff says :—

"Tertullian's opposition had no influence, at least no theoretical influence, even in North Africa."[1]

Then we come to Origen, who was one of the greatest of the early Fathers, and the most learned man of his time. He was born about A.D. 185, of Christian parents. He says—

"Infants also are by the usage of the Church baptized."[2]

Again :—

"Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins."[3]

And again :—

"The Church had an order from the Apostles to give Baptism even to infants."[4]

We come next to Cyprian, who was born about A.D. 200. In the year 253 there was a Council of sixty-six bishops or pastors held at Carthage, in which Cyprian presided. To this council Fidus, a country pastor, submitted the question whether

[1] *Ante-Nicene Christianity*, vol. i., p. 261.
[2] *Homilia* 8 *in Levit.*, c. 3. [3] *Homilia* 14 *in Lucam.*
[4] *Comment. in Epist. ad Romanos*, Lib. v., c. 9.

an infant before it was eight days old might be baptized if need required, or whether it was necessary, as in the case of Circumcision, to wait till the eighth day. The reply of the Council was unanimous, and the concluding paragraph, which sets forth the decision, begins as follows :—

"This, therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the Council, that we ought not to hinder any person from Baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind and loving to all. And this rule, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants, even to those newly born." [1]

We pass on to the testimony of Augustine, born A.D. 354. In the course of a controversy with Pelagius, who denied original sin, he points out that infants are baptized for the remission of sins, and he goes on to show that Pelagius to be consistent must deny Infant Baptism as well as original sin. Pelagius replied :—

"Baptism ought to be administered to infants with the same sacramental words which are used in the case of adult persons." [2]

"Men slander me as if I denied the Sacrament of Baptism to infants." . . . "I never heard of anyone, not even the most impious heretic, who denied Baptism to infants." [3]

Again, Augustine says in reference to the Pelagians :—

[1] *Cypriani Epist. ad Fidum.*

[2] Quoted by Augustine, *De Gratia Christi,* cap. 32, and elsewhere.

[3] Quoted by Augustine, *De Peccato Originali,* cap. 17, 18,

"Since they grant that infants must be baptized, as not being able to resist the authority of the whole Church, which was, doubtless, given by our Lord and His Apostles, they must consequently grant that they stand in need of the benefits of the Mediator." [1]

Here, then, were two of the most learned men of the time, who lived about three hundred years after the close of the Apostolic age, and who were, doubtless, well acquainted with the writings of those who had preceded them, and yet neither of them had ever heard of anyone calling himself a Christian who denied Baptism to infants.

Now if Infant Baptism had been, as the Baptists say, an innovation that arose in the Church about the end of the second century, it is a curious thing that not one of the early Christian writers has a single word to say about such an innovation. Supposing it to have been an innovation, it could not have crept into the Church without serious opposition. And it is certain that at least some trace of the struggle, to which it must have given rise, would have appeared in the writings of the early Fathers. The fact that there is no reference in any of the Fathers to Infant Baptism as an unscriptural innovation is proof that it was not an innovation, but a practice that was handed down from the Apostolic age. The doctrine of Infant Baptism was never called in question, in the Bap-

[1] *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione et de Baptismo Parvulorum*, Lib. i., c. 26.

tist sense, till about the year 1522, when the Anabaptists arose in Germany. In the thirteenth century a Frenchman named Peter de Bruis and a handful of followers called, after him, Petrobrusians, opposed Infant Baptism on the ground that infants were incapable of salvation. But that is not Baptist ground. So that the Baptist view on this question has not only no footing in Scripture, but no footing in history until you come to the sixteenth century.

LECTURE X.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM—*concluded.*

We have dealt with the question as to the Subjects of Baptism, treating it, as we proposed, in accordance with the historical method. We have studied carefully every Scripture passage that can be taken as bearing immediately and directly upon this question—at least we have not overlooked any passage that is supposed to favour the Baptist view as opposed to ours—and we have ventured to supplement our somewhat exhaustive examination of Scripture teaching by a brief and cursory examination of the testimony of some of the early Fathers, not that we think Scripture needs to be supplemented by Church History, but that our Baptist friends are in the habit of claiming the two first centuries of the Christian era as entirely their own. We have seen that the distinctively Baptist position in relation to this question has no foundation whatever in the Word of God, and no foundation whatever in Church History until the Anabaptists arose in the sixteenth century, so that it is destitute not only of the supreme and sufficient sanction of Scripture, but also of the subordinate

and insufficient sanction of antiquity. Of course it is understood that the practice of the Church in the first centuries of the Christian era is valuable, in this connection, only in so far as it sheds light on the practice of the Church in the Apostolic age. No later age can speak with the note of authority in its voice, unless its deliverances are found to be in harmony with Apostolic precept and Apostolic practice. Thus we have shown that the Baptist arguments, for which it is sought to find a basis in Scripture, are inconclusive even when they appear to be most cogent, and that the Baptist objections, for which it is sought to find a basis in Scripture, are invalid even when they appear to be most forcible. Apart, however, from Scripture, there are a few considerations of somewhat secondary importance that our Baptist friends are in the habit of bringing forward with the view of creating difficulties for those who believe in the lawfulness of Infant Baptism. And as we have all along pursued the policy of examining every point that, by any stretch of imagination, could be supposed to make for the Baptist contention, so we shall gladly extend to the remaining representations that are submitted in the Baptist interest the courtesy of a careful and candid consideration.

ADVANTAGES OF INFANT BAPTISM.

And, first of all, we are asked to explain what good is done by pouring a few drops of

water on the face of an "unconscious babe." Of course if it were simply a matter of putting a few drops of water on a baby's face, apart from every other consideration, the action might not have any particular significance and might not be followed by any particular advantage, just as the immersion of an adult in a tank, apart from every other consideration, might not have any particular significance, and might not be followed by any particular advantage. But when we remember that the child is the child of professedly believing parents who are in the membership of the Church; when we remember that these parents have come to dedicate their child to God in the presence of His people, and to pledge themselves to teach and to train him in the knowledge of Christian truth and in the way of Christian life; and when we remember that in Baptism the Church status of the child is publicly recognised, and that the ordinance itself is a sign and seal of Covenant blessings—when we remember these things, we are in a position to realize that, in these circumstances, there may possibly be some advantage in the authoritative symbolical application of water to the child. If the question of benefit is to be considered we must look at the whole situation, and not disconnect the baptismal act from its surroundings.

But this question as to the benefit of Infant Baptism is not quite relevant to the issue that

every lover of the truth must wish to reach in connection with this subject. The only question that is to the point here is the question as to whether the practice of Infant Baptism has Divine sanction and appointment. If it has, we need not pursue our inquiry any further, because every ordinance of God is productive of benefit to all who participate in it, whether we can define the benefit or not. Indeed, in the very nature of the case, it is impossible for us to formulate all the advantages, or even the most important advantages, that flow, in a particular instance, from the observance of a Divinely-appointed rite. On the other hand, if Infant Baptism is not of Divine appointment, the question of benefit need not be considered, for, even if benefit could be proved, it would not, in that case, be sufficient to justify the continuance of a practice for which there is no warrant in the Word of God.

Now, if we have made good our contention in previous lectures as to the Scripturality of Infant Baptism—and of that, I think, there can be no doubt—then this question as to its benefit is both irrelevant and impertinent. There is always great advantage in submitting to an ordinance of God. There is always great advantage in complying with the will of Christ. When, in the days of our Lord, the mothers brought their children to Him that He might lay His hands on them, some of the more coarse-grained adults who stood around might have

thought that the Saviour's touch would bring no benefit to the "unconscious babes." But the finer instinct of the maternal heart more accurately appreciated the possibilities of the situation, and more correctly interpreted the mind of the Master. And so Jesus rebuked the dull-witted utilitarian obstructives that, in their ignorance, stood between Him and the little children, and, by His direction, the babes were brought to Him, and He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them. Who will say that the "unconscious babes" derived no benefit from the Saviour's benediction and the Saviour's touch? Certainly not those who enter aright into the spirit of this instructive incident and who appreciate aright its bearing upon the question with which we are dealing. It is easy to see that an indelible impression for good was made on the hearts of these favoured mothers in Israel, that this impression became a means of grace not only to the mothers themselves, but also to their children, and that the impress of the Saviour's touch and the echo of the Saviour's blessing remained with them to the end of their days as the most precious treasure of memory, and became a powerful factor in determining their own destiny and the destiny of their offspring. Who will say that the blessing of God cannot find its way to the infant heart? Who will say that God does not reserve for Himself an avenue of communication by means of which the influences

of His grace can, from the very first, reach the spirit of the little child? Who are we with our clumsy capabilities and our semi-conscious sensibilities that we should make our fragment of knowledge the measure of God's working? There are more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, and the near-sighted, narrow-souled utilitarianism that is always on the lookout for a benefit which it can measure with its inch-long rule has not a monopoly of the wisdom that is wise in relation to the things of the Kingdom. Some of us, at any rate, will continue to believe that the believing prayer of the believing parent who takes his stand on the Covenant promise and dedicates his infant child to God in the ordinance of Baptism will not remain unanswered, that God will not refuse to honour His own promise, and that an appropriate blessing will not fail to attend the right observance of one of the most important means of grace.

But descending somewhat into detail we can easily see that far-reaching advantages must come to the child that is dedicated to God in Baptism by believing parents. Our Baptist friends might just as well ask what profit there was to the child in Infant Circumcision as ask what benefit there is to the child in Infant Baptism. Fortunately that question has been anticipated by the Apostle Paul in Romans iii. 1, where he asks: "What is the profit of Circumcision?" And the ready answer is:

"Much every way." That also is our answer to those who inquire concerning the profit of Infant Baptism. There is much profit every way. In the first place, it is an advantage to the child to have his status recognised and to have a place, from the very first, among God's professing people. It is an advantage to the child to be introduced into an atmosphere of faith and prayer that may reasonably be expected to exert a powerful formative influence on his life and character. It is an advantage to the child that his parents should realize that their hands are sustained and their hearts encouraged, in the difficult task of training their child for God, by the sympathy and the prayers of their fellow-Christians who are members of the same Church.

Then, again, it is an advantage to the child that his parents publicly pledge themselves to train him in the knowledge and love and fear of God. You know how important it is that the young should be rightly trained, how important it is that they should be trained to fitness for the earthly service to which they may be called; and how much more important it is that they should be trained to fitness for the higher service of the higher calling; and I am convinced that the vows which parents take upon them at the Baptism of their children help to hold them to a right performance of the duty of family training. It may be said that this duty lies at the door of

parents independently of Baptism, but surely it is in accordance with the spirit and even in accordance with the terms of the great Commission that the children should be discipled through Baptism and teaching. They are entered in infancy as scholars in the school of Christ, and we cannot enter that school too early. Parents are bound to train them for God, and the Church is bound to exercise such supervision as may be practicable and to see, as far as possible, that they are trained in such a way that God's claim upon them shall always be recognised and acknowledged. Thus Baptism, when rightly observed and when followed up by faithfulness on the part of the parents and faithfulness on the part of the Church, secures for the child the unspeakable advantage of early Christian training. That is beyond all question the greatest advantage that can come to any of us in this life.

Besides, it is a great advantage to the child to be committed in advance to the right course. We need not stay to notice the objection that is sometimes made to the action of the parent in choosing a religion for his child and thus interfering with the child's freedom. I am sure I do not need to say that the parent is not only at liberty to choose for his child, but that he is bound to choose for his child until the child comes to be in a position to choose for himself. The parent is bound to choose for his child and he is bound to choose for the ad-

vantage of the child. Suppose the parent did not choose for the child that he should go to school, and did not choose for the child that he should be trained for the duties of some position in which he should be able to fill a man's place and do a man's work, the so-called freedom thus mistakenly allowed would be a poor substitute for the advantages of a sound education and a useful calling. It is clearly a parent's duty to choose for his child until he comes to be capable of choosing for himself, and, above all, it is the duty of a parent to choose for his child that he shall walk in the way of rightness, and set his heart on the things that pertain to his eternal peace. And if this choice is made by the parent, and if, by the Divine blessing, the child is faithfully trained along the line of this choice, and is thus brought to appreciate something of the blessedness that comes from knowing and obeying the will of God, he will at length, of his own accord, gladly accept the choice which a godly parent has made on his behalf, and will lift up his heart in gratitude to the God of all grace, for the advantage that he enjoys through the faithfulness and thoughtfulness of a parent, who chose aright for him when he was unable to choose for himself, and who, by counsel and example, guided him in the right way when he was unable to guide himself.

We must not omit to notice that Baptism is useful, as Dr. Candlish has pointed out in his excellent handbook, both as a sign and a seal to

the growing child. When his intelligence is awakened, and when he sees the ordinance administered to other children, and when he is told that it was administered to himself, he is sure to ask for an explanation of the service, and then the parents have a fine opportunity of telling him about the "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit," which are needed even in the case of the youngest children. That truth is brought home to his mind in the most impressive way by the symbolical washing of Baptism, and he is thus helped to realize that even the young need to have the cleansing and purifying influence of the Holy Spirit applied to their hearts that they may be saved from the guilt and impurity of sin and freed from the bondage which it brings. Thus Baptism is useful to the child as a sign. And, then, it is useful to him also as a seal or token of God's love. The child can be made to feel that God has a purpose of mercy toward him in that he has received this seal. A child in infancy receives a valuable present as a mark of goodwill on the part of some kind friend who is deeply interested in his welfare, and who intends that this present shall be a pledge of further favours. The present is carefully kept for the child until he comes to understand something of its nature and its value, and then he is told of the friend who gave it to him and why it was given. As a natural consequence the gratitude of the child goes forth to his benefactor, and

the relationship of disinterested kindness and consideration and love, on the part of the friend, is supplemented by that of confidence and attachment and affection on the part of the child. And so it is, or may be, in regard to the baptismal seal which the child receives in infancy. It is well that children should be taught to know that God thinks of them, and takes an interest in them, and regards them as His own. It is well that they should be taught to know that Baptism is a seal of God's favour and a pledge of His willingness to confer further favours. It is well that the relationship of loving-kindness and tenderness and graciousness which God sustains toward them should be early recognised, and should early call forth on their part the responsive relationship of gratitude and submissiveness and obedience to Him. And Baptism may be turned to good account in this connection, as a seal of God's favour. As Dr. Candlish says :—

"It (Baptism) is all the more precious and useful as a sign of God's Covenant, a token of His love, because it is given from earliest infancy : it testifies of a love that has met us at the very outset of our life, of a Saviour who has been waiting and ready to receive us ever since we had a being. In this way it really benefits the soul of the receiver, though given in unconscious infancy, and benefits him all the more as a seal of God's grace just because it has been given in infancy, its efficacy not being tied to the moment of time when it is administered."[1]

But then we are told that, as a matter of fact,

[1] *The Christian Sacraments*, p. 75.

these advantages do not, in most cases, attend the practice of Infant Baptism, that the anticipated result does not as a rule follow the administration of the ordinance, that baptized children do not often realize the professed desire of those who dedicate them to God in infancy, and that the presence, in any communion, of so many baptized persons who, even in the judgment of charity, cannot be regarded as regenerate is calculated to encourage inadequate and unworthy ideas as to the requirements of the Christian religion, to lower the standard of Christian living, and to exert, in other ways, an injurious influence on the Christian Church. It must be admitted that, in too many cases, parents do not faithfully give themselves to the fulfilment of the vows they made when their children were baptized, that family training does not, even in many Christian homes, receive the attention its importance deserves and demands, and that in some cases children who were baptized in infancy seem to set aside the engagement to be the Lord's that was made for them at the time of their dedication. It is true that some of those who are baptized in infancy do not, in the first instance at any rate, fulfil the expectations of the office-bearers and members of the Church into whose fellowship they have been received, just as it is true that some of those who are baptized on their own profession do not fulfil the expectations of the office-bearers and

members of the Church into whose fellowship they have been received. It is true that the advantages which Infant Baptism brings within the reach of Christian parents are not always laid hold of, and that Infant Baptism, as well as Adult Baptism, is sometimes abused. But what good thing is not abused? What ordinance of the Christian religion does not suffer through the inconsistency and unfaithfulness of unworthy participants? What Christian institution is safe from the blighting influence of the hypocrisy and unbelief of some of those who profess to take advantage of its benefits? If Infant Baptism is to be condemned, because it fails to guarantee to unbelief the blessings which it seals only to belief, then every other ordinance of the Christian religion is involved in the same condemnation. Judged by this test the Baptism of adults is in no better position than the Baptism of infants. We have only too much reason to humble ourselves because of the unfaithfulness of parents, and, it may be, because of the unfaithfulness of Churches, and it must be acknowledged that this unfaithfulness has done more to bring discredit on Infant Baptism than all the superficial plausibilities of Baptist propagandists and proselytizers.

But we are not to throw overboard a Divine institution simply because it has not been rightly used. That would not be a very rational mode of procedure. If that course were taken in regard to every Church ordinance, it would lead to the

abandonment of such ordinances altogether. Obviously the proper course is to abandon, not the ordinance which is misused, but the unfaithfulness which leads to its misuse. Parents and Church members generally should lay this matter to heart, and should seek by increased faithfulness and increased attention to the training of the young to roll away whatever of reproach has been laid at the door of an ordinance of Christ. But when all is said and done, I am not sure that our Baptist friends have much ground for pluming themselves on the purity of their Church as compared with our own. I do not make any comparison, but I do not think that our Church would have any reason to shrink from such a comparison if it were made by a competent authority. However, it is not a source of pleasure to any Christian to know that there are defects in the membership of other Churches, and it is not the part of a Christian to build up a reputation for his own Church on the shortcomings of his neighbours. It is a source of regret to every Christian to know that there are defects in the membership of the Church to which he belongs, and it is his desire to have the character of his Church and of all Christian Churches elevated and improved by the removal as far as possible of all defects, and by the acquisition, as far as possible, of all the graces of the Christian life. And I am persuaded that Infant Baptism so far from being a cause of defects, and so far from being a barrier in

the way of Christian progress, is just an ordinance, which, if rightly used and improved, will give a powerful impetus to the formation and growth of Christian character and to the acceptance and prosecution of Christian service.

INFANT COMMUNION.

It has been stated that there is no argument that can be advanced in favour of Infant Baptism that is not equally valid for Infant Communion. We might meet that statement by a direct negative, and challenge anyone to point to a single argument we have advanced that can be compelled to yield such a conclusion. We content ourselves with two observations. First: Baptism corresponds to Circumcision, while the Lord's Supper corresponds to the Passover, but infants were not admitted to the Passover until they came to be capable of actively participating in the Feast and of understanding why it was kept. Thus the argument from Circumcision cannot be converted into an argument in favour of Infant Communion. Second: In the action of Baptism the subject is passive, and in that of the Lord's Supper the subject is active, so that, while an infant may be a recipient of Baptism, he cannot, in the nature of the case, be a recipient of the Lord's Supper.

BAPTISM A PUBLIC ORDINANCE.

I should like to say a word in conclusion as to the place where the ordinance of Baptism should be administered. The Directory of the Westminster Assembly is explicit on this point :—

"Nor is it (Baptism) to be administered in private places or privately, but in the place of public worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear."

The Book of the Constitution and Government of our Church, with the requirements of which, as loyal Presbyterians, we are bound to comply, provides that—

"This ordinance shall be administered publicly unless in cases recognised by the Session as exceptional."[1]

The Synod of Derry and Omagh is most anxious that this law shall be faithfully observed within its bounds, and that, unless in exceptional cases, Baptism shall be administered at some stated diet of worship. I need hardly say that I am thoroughly at one with the Westminster Divines, with the General Assembly, and with the Synod of Derry and Omagh, and I trust that the loyal members of this congregation and all our congregations will see the propriety and the fitness of upholding the authority of Church Courts and of having Baptism administered in the presence of the congregation.

It is obviously most agreeable to the nature of

[1] Page 142, par. 644.

the ordinance that it be administered in public. Baptism recognises membership in the visible Church, and therefore it is fitting that this recognition should take place where there is a visible congregation. Sometimes it takes place where the amount of visibility, in this regard, is reduced to a minimum. If a new member is getting initiated into some society it is more respectful to him that he should be received at a full meeting of the society and not at some hole-and-corner conclave, as though the great body of the members were ashamed to recognise him. It is evident that the larger and more representative the meeting at which he is received into the ranks of membership the greater the honour conferred upon him in his reception. And so with Baptism. Apart from every other consideration there is a certain degree of respect and regard manifested toward the parents and the child when Baptism is administered in the presence of a full congregation. And I do not know any reason why parents should deny themselves this mark of respect and regard. Of still more importance is the consideration that the beginning of a young life within the membership of the Church is a matter of interest to the whole congregation. The whole congregation should join together with one heart in the baptismal service. The members of the congregation are not simply spectators. They are parties to the act of Baptism, and they, as well as the parents, have a measure of responsi-

bility in relation to the infant baptized. Surely it is a matter of some consequence that parents should seek to have their children received into the congregation in such circumstances, that they should dedicate their offspring to God in the presence of His people, and that on this solemn occasion they should have the sympathy and the prayers of those who are associated with them in the membership of the Church. Such advantages as these are not to be lightly esteemed. And the more parents appreciate the nature of this ordinance, and the more they enter into the spirit in which it ought to be observed, the more anxious will they be to have it administered in the presence of the congregation, and to have their hands strengthened by the believing prayers of God's believing people.

LECTURE XI.

REVIEW.

In this lecture we propose to undertake a summary review of what has been done in previous lectures of this course, noticing a few points that have not yet been touched upon, and referring briefly to some matters of an incidental nature.

THE MODE OF BAPTISM.

We have discussed the question of Baptism, dealing separately with the departments of Mode and Subjects into which it naturally divides itself. With regard to Mode, the Baptist position is that mode is essential to the right administration of the ordinance, and that immersion and nothing but immersion is Baptism. Our position is that mode is not essential to validity, that the ordinance is rightly administered by the application of water to the person, and that, as the rite is symbolical of purification, the quantity of water used is not a matter of importance. The main argument on which the Baptists rely to justify their exclusiveness as to mode is the meaning of the Greek verb *baptizo*. Dr. Carson held that this

verb always means "to dip and nothing but dip." Of course it must have that meaning or some meaning closely akin to that in order to serve the Baptist purpose. That contention, however, cannot be sustained in the face of the facts. In the Classics *baptizo* is used to describe not only what takes place when an object is put into water, but also what takes place when water is put upon, or comes upon an object. But even if it could be shown that *baptizo* in the Classics always means "to dip and nothing but dip," that circumstance would not only not be decisive in favour of the Baptist view of the question, but would actually leave the question untouched. For it is not a question as to Classical usage that has to be determined, but a question as to New Testament usage. And when we consider the circumstances of the New Testament writers, and the extent to which they were influenced by their training as Jews and as Christians, and more particularly when we remember that *baptizo*, in its literal application, was used by them in a special and technical sense unknown to the Classics, it is perfectly obvious that the New Testament usage must differ from the usage of the Classics. Therefore it is not enough, for the purpose of this investigation, to consult a Classical Greek Lexicon, such as that of Liddell and Scott, whether you take the smaller edition used by schoolboys or the larger edition used by more advanced students. It is not a Classical

Lexicon but a New Testament Lexicon that is needed.

It is sometimes stated that *baptizo* and its derivatives have been left untranslated in the New Testament. That statement is not quite accurate. It is perfectly true that in most places no translation has been attempted. It would seem that the word came to be so dominated by the special and sacramental sense in which it was used that an adequate translation was not found to be possible. Certainly attempted translations have only served to show the wisdom of our translators in leaving translation unattempted. The truth is, there is no single English word that will translate *baptizo* all through the New Testament. If you try *immerse*, by way of experiment, you will find that it is unequal to the requirements of the case. But, as we have seen, there are some instances in which a translation has been made. In Hebrews ix. 10, we have "divers washings" instead of "divers baptisms," and the writer is evidently referring to the ceremonial purifications of the Old Dispensation. These "washings" or baptisms were not necessarily effected by immersion, and it is even doubtful whether immersion was used in a solitary instance.

In a Baptist handbook, entitled *Pædobaptist Difficulties*, by Mr. John M'Lellan, an ex-Professor of the Baptist denomination in Scotland, which appeared a few weeks ago, and which purports to

be a reply to Dr. Bannerman's admirable handbook, *Difficulties about Baptism*, which appeared last year, the author tries to show that *some* of these "washings" were immersions, and he refers (pp. 29, 30) to Numbers xix. 7, 8, where we are told that the priest and he that burned the heifer were required to bathe their flesh in water. But surely immersion is not implied here. The flesh may be bathed without immersion. Neither the Hebrew verb *rachats*, which is used here, nor the Greek verb *louo*, by which it is translated in the Septuagint, means to immerse. It is quite true that Trench in his *New Testament Synonyms* tells us that *louo* means to wash the whole body. That, however, does not bring immersion any nearer, for the whole body may be washed without immersion. But even if immersion could be proved in some cases it would not be sufficient for the Baptist purpose. To vindicate their contention that "Baptism is immersion and nothing but immersion," they must prove immersion *in every case*. One case in which immersion was not used is sufficient to upset the Baptist position and establish ours, and in these "divers washings" we have not only one case in which immersion was not used, but we have an insuperable difficulty in finding a case in which it was used.

Again in Mark vii. 4 we have "they wash themselves" (literally, "they baptize themselves"). The washing referred to here was done with a view to

purification, and was not done by immersion. I know that the Baptists contend for immersion here as elsewhere, as in consistency they are bound to do, and point with a show of triumph to the fact that the American Revised Version of the New Testament gives "bathe" as the rendering here. But, as we have just seen, *bathe* does not imply immersion even when it is applied to the whole body. On this passage Dr. Morison observes in his Commentary (the italics are his):—

"*In the case before us the immersion of the whole body in water was really an absolute impossibility.* We wonder that even Meyer contends for it. It would have involved a bath-room, or at least a sufficiently ample plunge-bath, in every house and cot in the land. It would have involved, too, a supply of water such as has never yet been in Palestine during the present geological epoch. For the water that was once used for purifying would be ceremonially 'unclean,' and, therefore, unfit for further use by a second member of the household; and what, then, would become of the household when three or four or more required to baptize themselves? For the same reason a common public bath in every village would have been an impossibility among the Jews; the use of it by a single individual would have rendered it 'unclean' for all the rest of the population until it was replenished afresh for each. And even then the vessel itself would, until purified, be ceremonially defiled in consequence of contact with the unclean person (Numbers xix. 22). . . . The *baptism* which 'the Pharisees and *all* the Jews' performed on every occasion of coming home from the market-place or from any crowded place whatsoever in which they might have got entangled among a mass of miscellaneous individuals, *must* have been something else than 'immersion.' It would no

doubt in all ordinary cases be effected by 'sprinkling,' *the common mode of purification.*"

Whatever this washing was it was not an immersion of the body in water, and if it was not an immersion of the whole body in water there is an end of the Baptist contention that *baptizo* means "to dip and nothing but dip." The Pharisees "baptized themselves" without immersing the whole body in water. In the same verse we have "washings of cups" (literally, "baptizings of cups"). In Luke xi. 38 we have "washed before dinner" (literally, "baptized before dinner"). This was not a case of Baptism by immersion either.

John ii. 6 sheds some light on the purification or Baptism of guests. It reads: "Now there were six waterpots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece." According to the most liberal calculation these vessels could not have contained more than thirty gallons each, so that, apart from every other consideration, the quantity of water available for the purification of the guests on this occasion of festal abundance was obviously not sufficient for the purpose of immersion. It is evident that *baptizein*, as used among the Jews, meant *to wash with a view to purification.* The washing might be done by sprinkling, as in most cases it was, or by pouring, or in some other way, but in whatever way it was done, if it was done with a view to purification, it was Baptism. Now, *wash* is a general term that

does not imply any particular mode of cleansing, and therefore it serves in these passages to translate *baptizo*, which, according to our view, and according to the view of the highest authorities, does not imply any particular mode of purification.

Baptists sometimes try to make it appear that we translate *baptizo* by *sprinkle*, but that is only a part of the misrepresentation that seems to be the chief weapon of the ordinary Baptist controversialist. We object to have *baptizo* in the New Testament rendered *sprinkle* just as we object to have it rendered *immerse*, and our objection in the one case is just as great as in the other case. And we object in both cases for precisely the same reason, and that is that *sprinkle* and *immerse* are both expressive of mode, while *baptizo* is not. We prefer the New Testament translation *wash*, which is not expressive of mode. Agreeably to this view, the Westminster Divines define Baptism, as to its mode, as a "washing with water." Now the Jews were accustomed to describe their ceremonial washings as baptisms. That was the technical name of these purifications. And so when John the Baptist came they were quite prepared to understand the significance of his Baptism. John's Baptism at once linked itself on to these baptismal purifications with which the people were perfectly familiar.

It is worthy of note that in the New Testament Baptism is once implicitly referred to as purifica-

tion. In John iii. 25, we read: "There arose therefore, a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying." Why did this "questioning" or controversy arise? The word "therefore" carries us back to the verses immediately preceding, where we learn that John's Baptism was going on side by side with the Baptism of Jesus. It was quite natural in these circumstances that some of those who had received the one Baptism should get into a discussion with some of those who had received the other Baptism. Even among ourselves such a thing could be conceived of as possible. But if it were a discussion about Baptism why should it be described as "a questioning about purifying?" Why do we not find here the proper technical term "Baptism" itself? Because the discussion would naturally turn on the effectiveness of the one Baptism as compared with the other, and as the effect of Baptism was to purify, the controversy is said to have been about purification. As far as we can gather, the disciples of John were dissatisfied with this Jew for seeking Baptism from Jesus, and they complained to the Baptist himself that men were flocking to his rival and submitting to His Baptism. But John explained that it must needs be so, that his ministry was only preparatory to that of Jesus, and that Jesus must increase while he should decrease. This passage is of the highest importance as connecting, beyond all controversy, the

Baptism of John and that of Jesus with the ceremonial purifications of the Old Testament. John's Baptism, therefore, came in direct succession to the baptismal purifications with which the Jewish people were familiar, and we know that in most cases these purifications were effected by sprinkling or pouring. Thus, the Baptism of John takes its place in its natural and historical connection, and we are put into the right attitude for considering the mode in which it was performed.

The mode of John's Baptism was discussed so exhaustively in our second lecture that I do not need to dwell upon it here. Referring to the Baptism of the Saviour we proved that the Greek words used by the Evangelists do not necessarily imply that He entered the Jordan in order to be baptized, and we showed that even if it could be established, which it cannot, that our Lord entered the Jordan for this purpose, it cannot be proved that He was immersed in the river.

"FOLLOW THE LORD INTO THE RIVER."

And here I should like to notice an expression that Baptists try to turn to account when they meet with young and not too well-informed Christians that they wish to capture. It is this: "As a believer you are called upon to follow the Lord, and at the very outset you are called upon to follow Him into the river." As we have seen, it cannot be proved that our Lord entered the river.

But, apart from that altogether, we are not called upon to follow our Lord in His observance of every rite that belonged to a Dispensation which He brought to a close when He offered up His life on the Cross. And, in particular, we are not called upon to follow our Lord in His submission to John's Baptism, which served only a temporary purpose, and which passed away when that purpose had been served. For, as we have already pointed out, John's Baptism was not Christian Baptism. Christian Baptism was not instituted until our Lord issued His great Commission. So far as the record shows, Christian Baptism was performed for the first time on the Day of Pentecost. Besides, we learn from Acts xix. 1-5, that certain disciples at Ephesus who had received John's Baptism were re-baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. This one incident would be sufficient to show, even if we did not otherwise know it, that John's Baptism was not Christian Baptism.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

It will be remembered that in our third lecture we considered every instance of Christian Baptism that can shed any light on the question of Mode, and showed up to the point of demonstration that every one of these cases is unfavourable to the Immersionist view. In the fourth lecture we dealt with the remaining Scripture references that are supposed to bear on the mode of Baptism, and

showed that they do not in any case support the Baptist view, and that, where they have any bearing on the question, they support our view. In the conclusion of that lecture I dealt with the widely-circulated misrepresentation that the Westminster Assembly carried a motion in favour of sprinkling, as opposed to immersion, by twenty-five votes to twenty-four. I find that this misrepresentation has been repeated by Mr. John M'Lellan, in the handbook already referred to. Quoting, as he states, from the article on *Baptism* in the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, he says (the italics are mine) :—

"In the Assembly of Divines, held at Westminster in 1643 *it was keenly debated whether immersion or sprinkling should be adopted. Twenty-five voted for sprinkling and twenty-four for immersion* ; and even that small majority was obtained at the earnest request of Dr. Lightfoot, who had acquired great influence in the Assembly. Sprinkling is, therefore, the general practice in this country." [1]

The writer of this article does not seem to have known much about the position of the Westminster Assembly in relation to the question of Mode in Baptism, and does not seem to have known that sprinkling was "the general practice in this country" before the Westminster Assembly met, and that even the English Anabaptists practised sprinkling until the year 1641. It is not necessary for me to refute again this misrepresentation

[1] *Pædobaptist Difficulties*, pp. 53, 54.

in regard to the Westminster Assembly, and to repeat what I said at the end of my fourth lecture, based on Dr. Lightfoot's own account of the matter. But I will read you an extract from a book referred to in my fifth lecture, written by another Baptist, Mr. W. H. Whitsitt, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. President Whitsitt says (the italics are mine) :—

"When the Westminster Divines, who were preparing the Directory for Public Worship of God, came to discuss the subject on the 7th of August 1644, it was now their turn to reject immersion as their Continental predecessors had done. This rite had long been disused among Presbyterians, and *every member of the Assembly was agreed that sprinkling was the best mode of Baptism. The question at issue before them was whether immersion should be tolerated as an alternate form of Baptism and allowed to stand by the side of sprinkling?* Numbers felt unwilling to go on record as rejecting a New Testament usage (?) by formal action, and hence the vote was close. If they had allowed immersion to stand, it is likely that nobody in their communion would have employed it. But their sentiments were too decided even to allow it to stand. Twenty-five went against it, while only twenty-four were willing to concede that it was one of the modes by which Baptism might be administered. This was the most radical action against immersion which up to that time had ever been taken by one of the larger denominations of Christendom."[1]

We give another quotation from this book of President Whitsitt in reference to the practice of the Anabaptists. He says :—

[1] *A Question in Baptist History*, pp. 32, 33.

"In conclusion the general result may be stated that few Anabaptists of any country were Immersionists, and that none of the Anabaptists of England in the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth centuries were Immersionists."[1]

BAPTISTS AND IMMERSION.

Immersion is regarded by at least one section of the Baptists as a matter of such importance that they will not admit to the Lord's Table in their own Churches any one who has not been immersed, and will not even sit down at the Lord's Table outside their own Churches with any one who has not been immersed. But the most outstanding men among the Baptists of to-day do not lay so much stress on the importance of immersion. I believe I am correct in saying that the most prominent Baptists in the United Kingdom at the present time are Dr. Alex. M'Laren, Dr. John Clifford, and Mr. F. B. Meyer, and Baptism by immersion is not a condition of Church-membership with any of them. They all receive into full communion those who have been baptized in infancy and who make a profession of faith. And John Bunyan, a greater than any of them, took a similar position and followed a similar course. In his *Differences in Judgment about Water Baptism no Bar to Communion* he denounces, in that vigorous Anglo-Saxon of which he was a master, the narrowness of those who make too much of immer-

[1] *A Question in Baptist History*, p. 48.

sion while not making enough of other things more important. He says in one place—

"I tell you again that a discovery of the faith and holiness and a declaration of the willingness of a person to subject himself to the laws and government of Christ in His Church is a ground sufficient to receive such a member" (that is, one who has not been immersed).

INFANT BAPTISM.

I have not time to review the Scriptural argument in favour of Infant Baptism as we hold it. It will be enough to say that the infant children of God's professing people were in the membership of the Old Testament Church, that their status was recognised in the rite of Circumcision, that the New Testament Church is in all essential particulars the same as the Old Testament Church, that the privileges of the children have not been abridged under the Gospel Dispensation, that our Lord Himself has defined their position in relation to His Church and Kingdom, that Baptism has taken the place of Circumcision, and that the right of the infant children of Church members to receive Baptism was never once called in question, in the Baptist sense, until the Anabaptists arose in the sixteenth century, and was never once called in question in any sense until a handful of Petrobrusians, who have no claim to serious notice, arose in the thirteenth century.

Some one took exception to my statement that the Principle of Representation runs all through the

Word of God, on the ground that I did not carry it back farther than Abraham. I assumed that those who heard the statement would be able to carry it back for themselves, and that they would understand that it meets us in the beginning of Genesis, and that Adam was dealt with on this principle as the representative of the race. I took it for granted also that they would know that Noah, after he came forth from the ark, was dealt with on the same principle and treated as a representative, as we learn from Genesis ix. 8, 9 : "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold I, establish my Covenant with you and with your seed after you." Instead of presuming upon ignorance, after the manner of certain proselytizing controversialists, I assumed that the intelligent audience I addressed would have at least some slight acquaintance with the more elementary facts of Scripture History.

BAPTIST METHODS.

And here I should like to say a word in relation to Baptist methods of Church extension and controversy, more particularly in places where they are trying to secure a following and to build up a cause. It is usual for the Baptist worker who has learned his little part by rote to approach some simple-minded young man or woman who has decided for Christ and is seeking to obey the commands of Christ, but who is not too well instructed

in the things of the Kingdom, and who, in particular, has never given much thought to the subject of Baptism—it is usual for the Baptist worker to approach a person of this class and bring out his little arguments and put some puzzling questions which the person may not be able to answer at the time, and he feels that the Baptist has the advantage of him; and, on the impulse of the moment and on the urgent representation that is made, he may be led to think that the Baptist is in the right, and may commit himself to that admission without knowing what is to be said on the other side. What I should like to say to our young people is this:—"When you meet with kind friends who are so deeply interested in your welfare that they want to drag you away from your own Church and induce you to join their denomination, and when they ply you with objections to our teaching which you cannot meet and with questions which you cannot answer, don't come to the conclusion that because *you* cannot meet these objections and because *you* cannot answer these questions, they cannot be met and answered. If you meet with difficulties that you cannot see your way to surmount, consult your minister, who will be glad to see you and to help you, and don't come to the conclusion that your minister and the elders and the Sabbath-school teachers are not your friends, and that your only true friend is the faddist who has set himself to capture a convert for his own cause."

The ordinary Baptist controversialist moves within a very narrow circle of argument—if argument it may be called—and when he is forced outside the limits of his own little programme he finds himself very much at sea. A shrewd Presbyterian farmer once remarked to me, in a somewhat similar connection, that a blackbird has just three notes, and when these have been used he is ready to take himself to another tree. I do not vouch for the literal accuracy of the statement, but the spirit of it is true, and the significance of it is unmistakable. If you proceed to deal with the subject of Baptism in a comprehensive and exhaustive fashion, the ordinary Baptist controversialist has practically nothing to say in reply, beyond citing a few quotations of individual opinion, most of them irrelevant, and many of them torn away from the context, and thus made to convey a misleading impression as to the views of the authors from whom they are taken. Baptists call on us to supply them with Scripture proof, but they think any garbled extract from human writings good enough for us. They build greatly on the admissions of Pædobaptists, as they call them. With these admissions we have no concern. They concern their authors only. But if Baptists are satisfied with the case they can build on such a basis, we have no reason to be dissatisfied with the case that is built for us on the impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture.

THE TERM "BAPTIST."

I must explain that I have used the term "Baptist" throughout these lectures in the common acceptation as applying to the denomination calling itself by that name. I have done so as a matter of courtesy, and not because I admit their right to be so designated. The implication, of course, is that they alone baptize, just as some good people who call themselves "Christians," and will not allow themselves to be called anything else, imply that they alone are worthy to bear the name of Christ. I do not say that the so-called "Christians" are not Christians, and I do not say that the so-called "Baptists" are not Baptists, but I do say that they are not the only Christians and that they are not the only Baptists. We claim to be Baptists, and with good reason, because we practise Christian Baptism, and because our Baptism is in strict conformity with Scripture teaching. We deny the right of Immersionists to the exclusive use of the designation "Baptist," and we brand as impertinent the reflection that is thus implicitly made on other denominations of Christians.

CONCLUSION.

I may say in conclusion, as I said at the beginning, that I have been led to deal with this question of Baptism simply and solely because I knew

that our people, and especially our young people, needed some teaching on the subject. Three years ago I made up my mind to give a series of lectures on Baptism, but owing to the amount of time I had to give, up to last meeting of Assembly, to the editing of the *Records of the General Synod of Ulster*, I was unable to give attention to the matter any sooner. My object in these lectures has been expository rather than controversial. If, at times, it was necessary to be somewhat controversial I cannot help it. Controversy has its place in the work of a public teacher, and, for my part, I shall not shrink from controversy when I consider it necessary in the interests of truth. I do not regard as an empty form the vow I made at my ordination, when I solemnly undertook to teach the doctrine of our Church and to defend it to the utmost of my power against all error. Some may think that the subject of Baptism is not of sufficient importance to claim so much attention. With that opinion I do not agree. I am thoroughly convinced of the necessity of all that has been said, and I am thoroughly satisfied that these lectures, whatever their imperfections may be, have been given in response to a clear call of Duty. My one object has been to serve the cause of truth, and I trust that object has been, in at least some measure, attained.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Βαπτίζω IN THE CLASSICS.

WE select a few instances, out of the large number that might be given from the Classics, in which Βαπτίζω does not mean "to dip and nothing but dip."

1. Λέγουσι τοὺς Φοίνικας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὰ Γάδειρα καλούμενα ἔξω πλέοντας Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν ἀπηλιώτῃ ἀνέμῳ ἡμέρας τέτταρας, παραγίνεσθαι εἴς τινας τόπους ἐρήμους, θρύου καὶ φύκους πλήρεις, οὓς ὅταν μὲν ἄμπωτις ᾖ μὴ βαπτίζεσθαι, ὅταν δὲ πλημμύρα, κατακλύζεσθαι. —*Aristotle, De Mirabil. Auscult.*, 136.

"They say that the Phœnicians who inhabit the parts called Gadeira (Cadiz), sailing beyond the pillars of Hercules for four days with an easterly wind, come to certain desert places abounding with rushes and sea-weed, which when it is ebb-tide are not baptized (covered with water), but when it is full tide are flooded."

Dipping or immersion is out of the question here. The water comes upon the sea-coast and baptizes it.

2. Τῶν δὲ χερσαίων θηρίων τὰ πολλὰ μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ περιληφθέντα διαφθείρεται, βαπτιζόμενα. —*Diodorus Siculus*, Lib. i., Cap. 36.

"The greater number of the land animals overtaken by the river perish, being baptized."

The overflowing of the Nile baptizes these animals. This is not a case of baptism by dipping or immersion.

3. Ἀσκὸς βαπτίζῃ, δῦναι δέ τοι οὐ θέμις ἐστιν. —*Plutarch; Theseus*, xxiv.

"As a bladder thou mayest be baptized; but thou art not fated to go down."

This was an oracular response in reference to the fate of Athens, quoted by Plutarch in his Life of Theseus. A bladder floating on the surface of the sea might be baptized or drenched by the rolling and breaking waves, without *going down into the water*, for that is the force of δύνω. This is a clear case of baptism without immersion.

4. Οἰνῳ δὲ πολλῷ Ἀλέξανδρον βαπτίσασα.—*Conon; Narrat.*

"Having baptized Alexander with much wine," that is having made him drunk with much wine.

Here is a baptism by means of a physical liquid without dipping; for Alexander was not baptized after the manner of the unfortunate Duke of Clarence. There is not even the most remote suggestion of immersion in the case of this baptism.

It will be noted that the dative denotes the instrument by which, and not the element in which, the action was done.

5. Ἐπειδήπερ ἐκ τῶν βαναύσων διάπυρος ὁ τοῦ σιδήρου μύδρος ἐλκυσθεὶς ὕδατι βαπτίζεται, καὶ τὸ φλογῶδες ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας φύσεως ὕδατι κατασβεσθὲν ἀναπαύεται. — *Heraclides Ponticus; Homeric Allegory.*

"For a mass of iron heated to redness, being drawn out by the smiths, is baptized (overwhelmed) with water, and that which was fiery by its own nature, being quenched with water, ceases to be so."

Here, as in the last example, the dative denotes the instrument by which, and not the element in which, the red hot iron was baptized. "With water" is the correct translation, and not "in water." The baptism, in this case, was not done by immersion, but by pouring.

NOTE B.

βαπτίζω IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND APOCRYPHA.

2 KINGS v. 14.

1. Καὶ κατέβη Ναιμὰν καὶ ἐβαπτίσατο ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ἑπτάκις κατὰ τὸ ῥῆμα Ἐλισαιέ.

"And Naaman went down and baptized himself in the Jordan seven times according to the word of Elisha."

This is the only place in the Septuagint where the Hebrew verb *tabhal* is translated by *βαπτίζω*. It is generally translated by *βάπτω*. In Genesis xxxvii. 31 it is translated by *μολύνω* (*to stain*).

It is admitted that in many of the passages in which it occurs *tabhal* means *to dip*. In other passages, such as Leviticus iv. 17 and xiv. 16 with *min*, it means *to moisten with*. In Genesis xxxvii. 31, it does not mean that the whole garment was dipped into, and covered with, the blood of the goat. Such a thing would obviously have been impossible. If there was dipping in the case of Joseph's coat it must have been partial. Even when dipping is implied the object of the verb *tabhal* is not, of necessity, completely immersed in the element to which reference is made. So that even if Naaman "dipped himself," as we have it in the English version, it does

not follow that the dipping was more than partial. The disease was evidently local (See v. 11, "And wave his hand *over the place*").

But *tabhal* in this passage is the equivalent of *rachats*. In the tenth verse Naaman was commanded to "wash" (*rachats* = λούω = *lavo*). In the fourteenth verse he did as he was told, for he acted "according to the saying of the man of God" and baptized (washed) himself. The Vulgate has the same verb (*lavo*) in both verses.

According to Fürst the primary meaning of *tabhal* is *to moisten, to sprinkle*.

Isaiah xxi. 4.

2. —ἡ ἀνομία με βαπτίζει.

"Iniquity overwhelms me."

There is no suggestion of immersion here. The translation of the Hebrew is "Horror hath affrighted me" (R.V.).

Ecclesiasticus xxxiv. 25.

3. βαπτιζόμενος ἀπὸ νεκροῦ καὶ πάλιν ἁπτόμενος αὐτοῦ, τί ὠφέλησεν τῷ λουτρῷ αὐτοῦ;

"He that washeth (baptizeth) himself after touching a dead body, and toucheth it again, what profit hath he in his washing?" (R.V.).

The baptism referred to here is ceremonial purification. A person who touched a body was thereby rendered ceremonially unclean, and purification (baptism) was effected by the sprinkling of the "water of separation" (Numbers xix. 11-19.).

Judith xii. 7.

4. Καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο κατὰ νύκτα εἰς τὴν φάραγγα Βετυλούα, καὶ ἐβαπτίζετο ἐν τῇ παρεμβολῇ ἐπὶ τῆς πηγῆς τοῦ ὕδατος.

"And she (Judith) went out every night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself at the fountain of water in the camp" (R.V.).

The circumstances of this case rule baptism by immersion out of court. It is not in the least likely that this attractive young Jewess would practise immersion in the Assyrian camp and in presence of the soldiers on guard. There can be no doubt that purification was the object she had in view in resorting to the fountain.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

	PAGE
Genesis ix. 8, 9	182
xii. 3	80
xvii. 1	80
xvii. 7	80
xxxvii. 31	188
Exodus xiv. 19-22	54
Leviticus iv. 17	188
xiv. 16	188
Numbers xix. 7, 8	171
xix. 11-19	189
xix. 22	172
Deuteronomy x. 16	85, 117
xxix. 10-13	87
xxx. 6	85, 117
2 Kings iii. 11	9
v. 10, 11	189
v. 14	188
Psalm lxxvii. 16-20	55
Isaiah xxi. 4	189
Jeremiah iv. 4	85, 117
xxi. 31-34	97
Ezekiel xxxvi. 25	12
Joel ii. 15, 16	88
Matt. iii. 5, 6	23
iii. 11	15
iii. 16	20
x. 40	107
xviii. 3	106
xviii. 5	106
xix. 14, 15	107
xxi. 43	111
xxviii. 19	115
xxviii. 19, 20	30, 89
Mark i. 4	25
i. 8	16
i. 9	18
i. 10	20
vii. 4	8, 171
ix. 36, 37	106
x. 13-16	107
x. 15	106
xvi. 15, 16	98
Luke iii. 16	16
xi. 37, 38	8
xi. 38	173
xviii. 15-17	107
xviii. 17	106
John i. 25	13
i. 26, 31, 33	16
i. 28	25
ii. 6	173
iii. 22	28
iii. 25	175
iv. 1, 2	29
ix. 7	19
x. 40	25
xxi. 15	109
Acts i. 5	16
ii. 3, 4	18
ii. 33	17
ii. 38, 39	116
ii. 39	81, 93
ii. 41	31, 124
iii. 25	94
iii. 25, 26	81, 93
vii. 38	88, 110
viii. 12	124
viii. 36-39	36
viii. 38	124
ix. 18	37, 125
x. 44, 45	38
x. 47, 48	38
x. 48	125
xi. 14-16	125

		PAGE
Acts	xi. 15, 16	38
	xi. 16	16
	xiii. 32, 33	82
	xv.	116
	xvi. 13-15	26
	xvi. 15	39, 125
	xvi. 33	125
	xvi. 33, 34	41
	xviii. 8	124, 125
	xix. 1-5	177
	xix. 5	124
	xxii. 16	37
	xxvi. 6, 7	82
Romans	iii. 1	155
	iii. 11	85
	vi. 3, 4	44
	xi. 17	111
	xv. 8, 9	82
1 Corinthians	i. 14	125
	i. 16	125
	vii. 14	132
1 Corinthians	x. 1, 2	54
	xi. 13	40
	xii. 13	48
Galatians	iii. 8	81
	iii. 17	97
	iii. 27	48
	iii. 29	82
Ephesians	i. 1	141
	ii. 19	112
	vi. 1	141
Colossians	i. 2	141
	ii. 11	85
	ii. 11, 12	116
	ii. 12	45
	iii. 20	141
Hebrews	viii. 8-12	97
	ix. 9, 10	6, 12, 28
	ix. 10	170
	ix. 13	7
1 Peter	iii. 20, 21	55

APOCRYPHA.

Ecclus. xxxiv. 25 189
Judith xii. 7 189

INDEX OF AUTHORS

QUOTED OR REFERRED TO.

	PAGE
Aristotle,	187
Ast, F.,	5
Augustine,	147
Baillie, Rev. Robert,	64
Bannerman, Dr. D. D.,	21, 171
Beet, Dr. J. A.,	139
Bunyan, John,	180
Candlish, Dr. James S.,	158, 160
Carson, Dr. Alex.,	3, 16, 54, 84, 100, 168
Conon,	188
Cyprian,	146
Dale, Dr. J. W.,	5, 20
Davis, Judge Noah,	138
Diodorus Siculus,	187
Edwards, Principal T. C.,	139
Godet, Dr. F.,	29, 139
Grove, Sir George, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*,	32
Halley, Dr. R.,	5
Heraclides Ponticus,	188
Irenaus,	144
Justin Martyr,	143
Lightfoot, Dr. John,	60, 179
M'Lellan, Mr. John,	170, 178
Marriott, Rev. W. B., in Smith and Cheetham's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*,	21
Meyer, Rev. F. B.,	117
Morison, Dr. James,	172
Origen,	146
Pelagius,	147
Plato,	5
Plutarch,	187
Schaff, Dr. P.,	146
Stokes, Dr. G. T.,	37
Stuart, Professor Moses,	5, 20, 50
Tertullian,	144
Trench, Dr. R. C.,	171
Whitsitt, President W. H.,	65, 79
Wilson, Sir C. W., in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*,	32
Wilson, Dr. R.,	5, 52, 140
Witherow, Dr. Thomas,	63

INDEX OF SUBJECTS.

Abrahamic Covenant, 79.
Abrahamic Promise, 80, 116.
Abuse of Infant Baptism, 162.
Advantages of Infant Baptism, 151.
Anabaptists, 63, 179; not at first Immersionists, 64, 179.
Analogy, a false argument from, 118.
Antiquity, testimony of, 59, 143.
Antitype Baptism, 55.
Apocrypha, 140, 189.
Apostolic Age, 122, 144.
Apostolic Commission, 30, 89.
Apostolic recognition of Children, 141.
Appendix, 187.

Baptism, Antitype, 55; and a profession of faith, 104, 122; a public ordinance, 165; a purification, 174; a sign and seal, 158; a symbol of purification, 52; at Ænon, 24; constituted a Christian ordinance by Christ, 30; into Christ, 49; into Christ's death, 49; in mission field, 67, 123; in Bethany (Bethabara), 25; in the Jordan, 18; Jews familiar with, 12; not a symbol of burial, 50; of Constantine, 145; of Cornelius, 38, 125; of Crispus, 125; of Eunuch, 35, 124; of Gaius, 125; of Households, 124; of Jailer, 41, 125; of Jewish proselytes, 12; of Lydia, 26, 39, 125; of Paul, 37, 125; of the three thousand, 31; related to constitution of visible church, 70; signifies more than it symbolizes, 51; takes place of Circumcision, 115; unto Moses, 54; with water and with the Holy Spirit, 15.
Baptism of our Lord, 15, 18; representations of, 21.
Baptism of Holy Spirit, at house of Cornelius, 38; at Pentecost, 17; leads to putting on of Christ, 48; unites to Christ, 48.
Baptism, Subjects of, 66-167.
Baptismal Regeneration, 48, 146.
Baptisms by Christ's disciples, 28.
Baptist example wanting in the New Testament, 127.
Baptist Individualism, 70.
Baptist Methods, 182.
Baptist misrepresentation, 174.
Baptist position, on Mode, 2; on Subjects, 66.
Baptizo, Classical Usage, 6, 169; New Testament Usage 6, 169; in the Classics, 187 in the Septuagint and Apocrypha, 188; Meanings of, 5, 174.
"Believers' Baptism," misleading, 68.

Benefit of Infant Baptism, 152.
Bethany (Bethabara), Baptism at, 25.
Bethulia, Valley of, 189.
Burial in the East, 52.
Burial of our Lord, 52.
Burial with Christ, 46; a consequence of Spirit Baptism, 49; not symbolized in Baptism, 50.

Cemetery of St Calixtus, 21.
Ceremonial Observances of the Jews, 7, 12, 174.
Children, Apostolic recognition of, 141; brought to Christ, 105, 153; holy, 132; in the Covenant, and in the Church, 87.
Christ and the Children, 105, 153.
Christian Baptism, instituted, 30; first recorded instance of, 35.
Church, continuity and identity of, 110.
Church invisible, 69.
Church in the Wilderness, 88.
Church visible, 69.
Church-membership of Children, 87, 90, 98, 114; affirmed by Christ, 107.
Church-recognition of Children, 70.
Church-standing of Children, 73, 87; Apostolic recognition of, 141.
Circumcision, a sign and seal of the Covenant, 84; "not made with hands," 48; of the heart, 85, 117; spiritual, 116; spiritual significance of, 85; succeeded by Baptism, 115.
Classical usage not enough, 6, 169.
Classics, *baptizo* in the, 187.
Clifford, Dr. John, 142, 180.
Climate, considerations of, 65.
Colosse, Children in Church at, 141.
Commission, Apostolic or Discipling, 30, 89; constitutes Baptism a Christian ordinance, 30; construction of, 89; does not define Mode, 30; recognises rights of Children, 96; Preaching, 98.
Congregation, Baptism in presence of the, 165; Convocation of, 88, Infants in, 88, Sanctification of, 88.
Constantine, Baptism of, 145.
Constitution and Government, Book of, 165.
Corinth, Baptisms at, 124.
Cornelius, Baptism of, 38, 125.
Council of Carthage, 146.
Council of Jerusalem, 116.
Covenant, Abrahamic, 79.
Children in the, 87;
of grace, 82.
Old or Sinaitic, 97;
New, 75, 97.
Crispus, Baptism of, 125.
Crucifixion not symbolized in immersion, 49.

Dative, instrumental, 161.
Dedication of infants, 142.
Discipling Commission, 98, 105.
Dispensation, Gospel, 56.
New, 29, 91, 110, 115.
Old, 14, 29, 110.
of Spirit, 56, 83.
Dispersion, Jews of, 34, 132.
"Divers Baptisms," 7.

Egyptians, immersion of, 55.
Emblematic representation, 45.
Ephesus, Children in Church at, 141; Baptisms at, 124.
Eunuch, Baptism of, 35.

Exclusive immersion not sustained, 61.

Family Baptism, 125.
Family Solidarity of, 126.
Family training, 156.
Fathers, testimony of Early, 143.
Fidus, Epistle to, 147.
"Following the Lord into the river," 176.
Foreign Mission Baptisms, 67.

Gaius, Baptism of, 125.
Greek Lexicon, 95, 169.
Testament, 140.

Hinnom, Valley of, 33.
Historical Method, 27, 76.
Holy Children, 132.
Holy Spirit, work of, symbolized in Baptism, 53.
Household, of Cornelius, 125; of Crispus, 125; of Jailer, 125; of Lydia, 125; of Stephanas, 125.

Immersionism, a form of Ritualism, 57; inconsistent with freedom of New Dispensation, 56; often impracticable, 57; not in Baptism into Christ, 49; not in Baptism of Holy Spirit, 18.
Individualism, 70.
Infant Baptism, abuse of, 162; advantages of, 151; not affected by Preaching Commission, 102; not a second century innovation, 148.
Communion, 164.
Dedication, 142.
Salvation, 100.
"Infant Sprinkling," 68.
Infants, may be disciples, 94; salvation of, 100; fit for Heaven but not for Baptist Church, 101.
Interment in East, 52; of our Lord, 52.
Invalidity of Baptism, 104.

Jacobites, Mode of Baptism of, 21.
Jailer, Baptism of, 41.
Jerusalem, Council of, 116; water supply of, 32.
Jewish Baptisms, 6.
John the Baptist, Mission of, 14; characteristics of, 24.
John's Baptism, a purifying rite, 14; at Ænon, 24; at the Jordan, 18, 24; circumstances of, 22; in Bethany (Bethabara), 25; in line with ceremonial purifications, 176; in the wilderness, 25; mode of not defined, 26; not by immersion, 26; not Christian Baptism, 15, 29, 177.
Jordan, Baptism in the, 18.
Joseph's coat, 188.
Judith, 189.

Kidron, the Brook, 32.
the Valley of, 33.
Kingdom of God, 107, 111.
Kingdom of Heaven, 107.

Language, changes in, 4, 6.
Loculus, 52.
Lord's Supper, a new institution, 12.
Mode of observance of, 11, 51.
Symbolism of, 51, 33.
Louo, 171, 189.
Lydia, Baptism of, 26, 39, 125.

Mark's Gospel, ending of, 99.
Maronites, mode of Baptism of, 21.
Mode of Baptism, 1-66.

Mothers bring children to Christ, 105, 153.
M'Laren, Dr. Alex., 180.
Meyer, Rev. F. B., 142, 180.

NAAMAN, 188.
Natural birth and Circumcision, 118.
New Dispensation, 29, 91, 110, 115.
New Testament, completion of old, 27.
New Testament Lexicon, 170.
Nipto, 19.

OLD Dispensation, 14, 29, 110.
Old Economy, 13, 56, 105, 110, 113.
Old Testament, not to be ignored, 27.
Sheds light on mode of Baptism, 28.
Olive tree, 111.

PARENTS Choosing for Children, 157.
Passover, 164.
Paul, Baptism of, 37.
Pentecost, 17, 31, 93, 120.
Peshito, 21.
Peter de Bruis, 149.
Petrobrusians, 149.
Position defined, as to Mode, 1. as to Subjects, 66.
Preaching Commission, 98, 106.
Principle of Representation, 74.
Prison at Philippi, 41.
Profession of Faith, at Baptism, 104, 122; at Circumcision, 85.
Proselytes, Baptism of Jewish, 12.
Public Baptism, 165.
Purification, Baptism a symbol of, 52; Circumcision a symbol of, 85; "Living water" used for, 25; of guests, 173.
Purifying, a questioning about, 175.

QUOTATION by Baptists, 62.

RECOGNITION of Children by the State, 71.
Red Sea, Baptism at, 54.
Representation, Principle of, 74.
Resurrection of our Lord, 30, 46.
with Christ, 46.
Review Lecture, 168.
Ritualism, Immersionism a form of, 57.
River, Baptism at, 26, 39.

SABBATH, 116.
Sacraments of perpetual obligation, 53.
Samaria, Baptisms at, 124.
Sanctification of unbelieving husband, 132.
Septuagint, 140.
Servants and Slaves, 126.
Siloam, Pool of, 19, 33.
Sinaitic Covenant, 97.
Spirit Baptism, 48, 56.
Spiritual birth and Baptism, 119.
State recognition of Children, 71.
Subjects of Baptism, 66-167.
Synod of Ulster, Records of, 3, 186.
Syriac Version of New Testament, 21.

TABERNACLE washings, 7.
Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, 59.
Temple, washings, 7; water supply of, 33.
Testimony of Antiquity, 59, 143.
Three Thousand, Baptism of, 31.
Tomb of our Lord, 52.

UNION with Christ, 47.
VALIDITY of Baptism, 104.
"Virgin's Fountain," 33.

WASHING of hands, 9.
Water, Jewish preference for running, 25.
Water Baptism, 12, 47, 48, 56, 119.
"Water of Separation," 7, 189.
Westminster Assembly, 59, 178.
Westminster Directory, 60, 165, 179.
Women of East, delicacy of, 40.

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